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The Flowers of the Forest.

Sir,—With reference to your article upon "Songs of the North," in December 26th issue, will you permit me to say there is another version of the words, equally beautiful to those by Jean Elliot, who, I might add, was the third daughter of Sir Gilbert Elliot of Minto?

I refer to those commencing "I've seen the smiling of Fortune's beguiling," composed by Alison Rutherford, at the age of seventeen, in 1720, daughter of Robert Rutherford of Fernalee, Selkirkshire, better known as Mrs. Patrick Cockburn. Later in life she resided in Edinburgh, and was on friendly terms with the poet Burns during his visit to Auld Reekie. Alison Rutherford's composition was published by Thomson in his "Select Collection of original Scottish Airs" (1793-96), but a transcript from the original holograph of the author with its quaint spelling was recently printed in the *Weekly Scotsman*. The original home of the Rutherfords, Fernalee, Selkirkshire, where the verses were written, since fallen into ruins, has been pulled down and rebuilt. I had a drawing of the mansion partly in ruins, by Edward Duncan, in a folio volume of his sketches, showing the turret where the verses were composed, being of historic interest. I sent the folio recently to the National Library, Edinburgh, and it was thankfully accepted.

Yours, etc.,

BARRINGTON NASH.

LETTERS AND MEMOIR
OF
MRS. ALISON RUTHERFORD
OR COCKBURN

150 copies printed



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MRS COCKBURN.

ABOUT FIFTY.

*Alison Rutherford, 1713-1794.
[Correspondence]*

LETTERS AND
MEMOIR OF HER OWN LIFE
By Mrs. Alison Rutherford
or Cockburn

ALSO

‘FELIX,’ A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH
AND VARIOUS SONGS

NOTES BY T. CRAIG-BROWN

*I've seen the morning with gold the hills adorning
In loud tempest storming befor mickle day.
I've seen Tweed's silver stream, shining in the sunny beam,
Grow drumbly and dark as it roll'd on its way.
O fickle Fortune! why this cruel sporting?
Why thus torment us poor sons of a day?
Nae mair y'r smiles can cheer me, nae mair y'r frowns can fear me,
For the flowers of the Forrest are a' wade away.*

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P R E F A C E

MRS. COCKBURN, says Sir Walter Scott, 'spoke both wittily and well; and maintained an extensive correspondence which, if it continues to exist, must contain many things highly curious and interesting.' No further warrant is needed for printing these letters, which Sir Walter no doubt had in his mind, being on intimate terms of friendship with Dr. Douglas, parish minister of Gala-shiels, to whom most of them were

addressed. It is some years since Mr. R. Douglas Thomson of Edinburgh (grandson of Dr. Douglas) granted permission to publish, but the proposal gathered impetus from the discovery, amongst Sir Walter's MSS. at Abbotsford, of Mrs. Cockburn's autobiography, and also of a short memoir of a friend whom she styles 'Felix'—since identified by Mr. A. H. Anderson, Edinburgh, as 'Ambassador Keith.' These two documents, both in Dr. Douglas's handwriting, were unearthed by the Rev. Wm. Forbes-Leith, S.J., and have been placed at the editor's disposal by the Honourable Mrs. Maxwell Scott. Letters to Mr. Chalmers and Miss Cumming have been

copied from *The Songstresses of Scotland*, a charming, if sometimes not quite accurate, book by 'Sarah Tytler' and J. L. Watson. Others have partly appeared in *Letters to David Hume*, and for such parts of these as have not hitherto seen the light thanks are due to the Royal Society of Scotland. Grateful acknowledgment falls to be made to Professor Seth Pringle Pattison of Haining and Fairnilee for suggestions of much value, and for kindly giving this work the advantage of his revision.

March 1900.

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‘THE perpetuation and the quality of Scottish song are greatly indebted to a line of ladies, extending from the seventeenth century to the present age, who wrote from natural impulse, for the amusement of their homes and relatives, or from a spontaneous interest in the history and manners of their country, not only without a view to gain or fame, but with a scorn of publicity. . . . They wrote but little, yet that little is marked by a felicity which often leaves the compositions of professional poets far behind. . . . The blossoms which a woman’s hand flung so lightly on the stream of popular memory float on for ever. The inspiration of an hour survives the labour of an age.’—Francis, 1st Lord Napier and Ettrick. *Edinburgh Review*, April 1898.



ARMS OF COCKBURN OF ORMISTON.
(From Mrs. Cockburn's Seal.)

INTRODUCTORY NOTES

ALISON RUTHERFORD, afterwards Mrs. Patrick Cockburn, was born at Fairnilee, manor-house of a pleasant Selkirkshire estate on the northern bank of Tweed. The place first emerges into written history as one of the stedes or steadings which passed with the rest of Ettrick Forest from the attainted Earl of Douglas to the second Scots King James. When his son, James III., married Margaret of Denmark, she got the whole Forest in her dowry, and for a manor-house the newly-built Tower of Newark, whither Scott led the aged Last Minstrel to recite his Lay. Fairnilee is about half an hour's canter from Newark, and only two miles, as the crow flies, from Ashiestiel, where Sir Walter was living when he

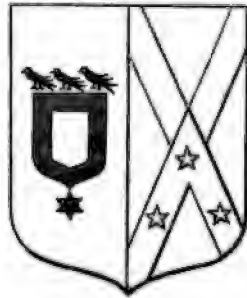
wrote *Marmion*. In his familiar lines upon the aspect of the Forest in winter—

No longer Autumn's glowing red
Upon our Forest hills is shed . . .
Away hath passed the heather-bell
That bloomed so rich on Needpath Fell—

Scott painted a bit of Fairnilee visible from his window. Little did Mrs. Cockburn, when she first discerned the genius of the boy, foresee that he would live to make the vale of her nativity as famous as Tempe. The age of the house, now a picturesque ruin, may be guessed from the sculptured coat of arms over the entrance, which is that of Robert Rutherford, who acquired the lands in 1700, and of Alison Ker his wife. It occupies the site, and probably includes part, of an ancient tower that served as shelter for a Jesuit wandering in the dangerous times immediately following the Reformation. In December 1582, Father Holt 'came to Cockburn House in Tivdale . . . tarried at Corbett House about vii dayes . . . from that was conveyed by the lard of Corbett to the larde lintounnes house of fernileye on twede in Ettrick forest, and he tarried ther xv dayes.'¹ About the middle of

¹ Tanner's Collection, Bodleian.

the next century it was not only one of the principal houses in the Shire,¹ but one of the few boasting a wood, and to this day it is surrounded by some fine old timber. A more beautiful and interesting stance is not to be found 'fast by the river Tweed' in all its course. From a level sunny sward, elevated by a steep bank perhaps a hundred feet above the 'silvery stream,' the house



COAT OF ARMS ON FAIRNILEE HOUSE
(as decipherable in 1885).

looks right across the river to the mansion, grounds, and 'sister heights of Yair.' Legends float about the whole countryside; and quite close to Fairnilee is the great prehistoric camp of Rink, whence that mysterious roadway, the Catrail, winds its way across streams and over hills to the English Border. Fit nursery indeed for the poetic and imaginative spirit of young

¹ Selkirkshire, i. 554.

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Alison Rutherford. Still in these prosaic days its glamour lingers—witness a charming fairy tale, ‘The Gold of Fairnilee,’ in which Mr. Andrew Lang has woven the stories and wonders of his own childhood.

Up till the time of Queen Mary there were no freehold lairds in Ettrick Forest. Except Thirlestane and some other church property, everything belonged to the Crown ; and though there were families who had occupied the same lands two hundred years, they were only tenants, and had to get their tacks renewed from time to time. Through leases and feu-charters Fairnilee was held by the ancient family of Ker up to 1700, when first John and then Robert Rutherford (Mrs. Cockburn’s father) bought the barony. Robert’s ancestry it is not now possible to trace. It is known his father was a bailie of Jedburgh, and his grandfather owner of lands on Rule Water ; but there certainty stops, leaving only Nisbet’s presumption that he came of the line of Hundalee, a branch of the Rutherfords of that ilk first mentioned in a charter of 1215. An old ms. account of the clan, however, derives the Fairnilee family from a Richard of Edgerston, instead of a Richard of Hundalee ; and this, says Mr. Cockburn-Hood,

2 Vols of Hairs Ruthford
 4th of Hairs Ruthford
 Fairnilee 1782 Record of 1791
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Robert, who married Anne, daughter of John Pringle, Lord Haining, by his wife Anne, daughter of Sir John Murray of Philiphaugh. Their daughter Anne, heiress of Fairnilee, married John Pringle of Crichton, son of that Mark Pringle of the Haining family who killed Scott of Raeburn (Sir Walter's collateral ancestor) in a duel. Their son Mark succeeded both to the Pringle estates of Haining and Clifton and to the Ruthford estate of Fairnilee. He married Miss Chalmers—the 'sweet Anne Page' of Mrs. Cockburn's letters. The late Mrs. Pringle Pattison of Haining (died 1898) was their granddaughter, to whose heir, Professor A. Seth Pringle Pattison, Fairnilee now belongs.

Samuel Ruthford of Faldonside.

John Ruthford, M.D.

Katherine, born 1699, married Robert, second son of Sir John Swinton, and brother of Jean Swinton who, marrying Professor Ruthford, became maternal grandmother of Sir Walter Scott. The author of *Waverley* was thus doubly related to Mrs. Cockburn.

Jean, married James Turnbull of Currie: marriage-contract dated 1725.

Margaret, married A. D. Ruthford of Capehope. Their daughter, Mrs. Cockburn's 'Niece Scott,' became wife of Scott of Wauchope, and entertained Burns (see p. 190 (a)).

ALISON RUTHERFORD, born (27th September O.S.) 8th October 1713. Married, 25th March

2 Vols of Hairs Ruthford
 4th of Hairs Ruthford
 Fairnilee 1782 Record of 1791
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1731, Patrick Cockburn, a younger son of Adam Cockburn of Ormiston, Lord Justice-Clerk. Died 1794.

Save the glimpses afforded in her own memoir and letters, it may be said that nothing is known of Alison Rutherford's infancy and girlhood, but her precocity. When she was married she was only between seventeen and eighteen, but before that she had had at least one serious affair of the heart. So much, indeed, was predicted by Mr. Freebairn, her 'professor of the French,' who in 1727 published at Edinburgh *L'Eloge d'Ecosse et des dames Ecossoises* :—

'Mais, O ciel ! quelle foule de jeunes Beutez que le Tems n'a pas encore meuries ne vois-je pas paroître en les aimables personnes de Mademoiselles Peggy Campbell, Murray, Pringle, etc. etc., et Alice Rutherford ! Voici une charmante et nombreuse troupe, dont l'Amour va bientôt combattre tous ceux qui renoncent à sa souveraineté. Les petits Cupidons sont de jour au jour occupés à forger des traits et à polir leurs charmes naissantes, dont elles remporteront bientôt une victoire complete sur les coeurs meme les plus rebelles.'

Pretty, vivacious, intelligent, and fond of

dancing, the young beauty at once became one of the 'toasts' of Edinburgh; and in her seventeenth year 'had several matrimonial as well as dancing lovers.' To one of these, she says, she gave her hand and heart; but in her letters there is evidence that of her heart she had already lost a considerable portion to another—young John Aikman (see pp. 55, 105). This poor fellow died in London in his twenty-second year, only a month or two after his sweetheart's marriage to Patrick Cockburn. She never forgot him, devotedly attached to her husband as she was during their two-and-twenty years of married life. Mr. Cockburn had passed advocate in 1728, but he appears not to have practised his profession, or, if he did, not to have succeeded at the bar. Probably he had grown up in expectation of a competency from his father or mother, who was a daughter of the Earl of Haddington; but it is clear that to the last he remained a poor man. John, his elder brother, who got possession of the paternal acres in 1714, was the famous 'Father of Scottish husbandry,' and founder of the Ormiston Society. His patriotic sacrifices in the cause of agricultural progress so crippled him that in 1748 he had to sell Ormiston to Lord Hopetoun; from him,

therefore, his brother Patrick and wife had little to look for. Of Mrs. Cockburn in her youthful beauty only one doubtful portrait is known to exist, but after she had passed her fiftieth year she sat for the miniature which is here reproduced. 'She had,' writes a lady to Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe, 'a pleasing countenance, and piqued herself upon always dressing according to her own taste, and not according to the dictates of fashion. Her brown hair never grew *grey*, and she wore it combed up upon a *toupée*—no cap—a lace hood tied under her chin, and her sleeves puffed out in the fashion of Queen Elizabeth, which is not uncommon now, but at that time was quite peculiar to herself.'

By Sir Walter Scott, who was twenty-three when she died, and who had many opportunities of knowing her, Mrs. Cockburn was sincerely respected and admired. He declares himself indebted to her collection for much of the ballad of 'the Outlaw Murray,' published in the *Minstrelsy* (1803), and in a preface to her song, 'The Flowers of the Forest,' says, 'Mrs. Cockburn has been dead but a few years. Even at an age advanced beyond the usual bounds of humanity, she retained a play of imagination and an activity of intellect, which must have been attractive and delightful in

youth, but were almost preternatural at her period of life. Her active benevolence, keeping pace with her genius, rendered her equally an object of love and admiration. The editor, who knew her well, takes this opportunity of doing justice to his own feelings; and they are in unison with all who knew his regretted friend. These verses were written at an early period of life, and without peculiar relation to any event, unless it were the depopulation of Ettrick Forest.' But, writing to his friend Rose, twenty-two years later, Sir Walter ¹ qualifies this statement by informing him that 'when a great deal of distress and misfortune came upon the Forest by seven Lairds becoming ruined in one year, Mrs. Cockburn composed the fine verses beginning,

"I've seen the smiling of Fortune beguiling."

The truth is, Scott's usual accuracy seems to have failed him when writing of Mrs. Cockburn. Describing his father in the fragment of *Autobiography* written in 1808, he says: 'Let me conclude this sketch with a few lines written by the late Mrs. Cockburn. . . . We must hold them to contain a striking likeness, since the

¹ Scott's *Letters*, ii. 354.

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original was recognised so soon as they were read aloud—

“ To a thing that 's uncommon—
A youth of discretion,
Who, though vastly handsome,
Despises flirtation.
To the friend in affliction,
The heart of affection,
Who may hear the last trump
Without dread of detection.” ’

But Mrs. Cockburn herself writes: ‘ You know my earliest and much lov’d friend Mr. Swinton [probably her sister Katherine’s husband] has gone to heaven. Twenty-six years ago I made a toast to him which may be his epitaph—

To the friend of affliction, the soul of affection,
Who may hear the last trump without fear of detection.’

And if Scott was wrong in thinking Mrs. Cockburn’s lines referred to his father, Lockhart was almost as certainly wrong in attributing certain lines in praise of young Walter (quoted in the fourth chapter of the *Life*) to Mrs. Cockburn. They exhibit a finish and sustained grace which would be looked for in vain in her other effusions.

Again, contributing his personal recollections

to Chambers's *Scottish Songs* (1829), Sir Walter confounds her with Mrs. *Catherine* Cockburn, an authoress of a very different stamp, who died in 1749, leaving a collection of works, 'Theological, Moral, Dramatic, and Poetical,' to be published after her death. In 1704 the Princess Sophia had dubbed this Mrs. Catherine *la nouvelle Sappho Ecossoise*. Mentioning that a turret in the old house of Fairnilee was still shown as the place where the poem was written, Sir Walter repeats the story of the seven ruined lairds, and continues : 'Mrs. Cockburn was herself a keen Whig. I remember having heard repeated her parody of Prince Charles' proclamation in burlesque verse to the tune of Clout the Caldron. In the midst of the siege or blockade of the Castle of Edinburgh, the carriage in which Mrs. Cockburn was returning from a visit to Ravelstone was stopped by the Highland Guard at the West Port ; and as she had a copy of the parody about her person, she was not a little alarmed at the consequences, especially as the officer talked of searching the carriage for letters and correspondence with the Whigs in the city. Fortunately, the arms on the coach were recognised as belonging to a gentleman

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favourable to the cause of the Adventurer, so that Mrs. Cockburn escaped, with the caution not to carry political squibs about her person in the future. Apparently she was fond of parody, as I have heard a very clever one of her writing upon the old song—"Nancy's to the greenwood gane." The occasion of her writing it was the rejection of her brother's hand by a fantastic young lady of fashion. The first verse ran thus—

"Nancy's to the Assembly gane
To hear the fops a-chattering ;
And Willie he has followed her
To win her love by flattering."

I further remember only the last verse, which describes the sort of exquisite then in fashion—

"Wad ye hae him, bonny Nancy ?
Na, I'll hae ane has learn'd to fence,
And that can please my fancy :
Ane that can flatter, bow, and dance,
And make love to the leddies ;
That kens how folk behave in France,
And's bauld among the caddies "

(an old-fashioned species of serviceable attendants, between the street-porter and the *valet-de-place*, peculiar to Edinburgh. A great number were always hanging about the doors of the

Assembly Rooms).’ Sir Walter here repeats his erroneous application to his father of the ‘toast’ to Mr. Swinton, and continues: ‘The intimacy was great between my mother and Mrs. Cockburn. She resided in Crichton Street, and my mother’s house being in George Square, the intercourse of that day, which was of a very close and uncere- monious character, was constantly maintained with little trouble. My mother and Mrs. Cockburn were related—in what degree I know not, but sufficiently near to induce Mrs. Cockburn to distinguish her in her will. Mrs. Cockburn was one of those persons whose talents for conversa- tion made a stronger impression on her contem- poraries than her writings can be expected to produce. In person and feature she somewhat resembled Queen Elizabeth, but the nose was rather more aquiline. She was proud of her auburn hair, which remained unbleached by time, even when she was upwards of 80 years old. She maintained the rank in the society of Edinburgh which French women of talents usually do in that of Paris; and her little parlour used to assemble a very distinguished and accomplished circle, among whom David Hume, John Home, Lord Monboddo, and many other men of name were

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frequently to be found. Her evening parties were very frequent, and included society distinguished both for condition and talents. The *petit souper*, which always concluded the evening, was like that of Stella, which she used to quote on the occasion—

“ A supper like her mighty self,
Four nothings on four plates of delf.”

But they passed off more gaily than many costlier entertainments. She spoke both wittily and well, and maintained an extensive correspondence which, if it continues to exist, must contain many things highly curious and interesting. My recollection is that her conversation brought her much nearer to a Frenchwoman than to a native of England; and, as I have the same impression with respect to ladies of the same period and the same rank in society, I am apt to think that the *vieille cour* of Edinburgh rather resembled that of Paris than that of St. James's; and particularly that the Scotch imitated the Parisians in laying aside much of the expensive form of these little parties, in which wit and good humour were allowed to supersede all occasion of display. The lodging where Mrs. Cockburn received the best society of

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her time would not now offer accommodation to a very inferior person.' ¹ Lady Anne Lindsay, herself a poetess, and the author of 'Auld Robin Gray,' describes, as an intimate friend of her mother (Lady Balcarres), 'Mrs. Cockburn, who had goodness, genius, Utopianism, and a decided passion for making of matches, for which reason she was the *confidante* of all lovesick hearts'—a character, it may be said, abundantly borne out by her correspondence. Lady Balcarres looked upon Mrs. Cockburn 'as a second mother; she was ten years her senior, but her mind was so gay, enthusiastic, and ardent, her visions were for ever decked with such powers of fancy and such infinite goodness of heart, her manners to young people were so conciliatory and her tenets so mild, though plentifully Utopian, that she was an invaluable friend between the mother and the daughter.' Here is what she thought of herself—

THE CHARACTER OF MRS. C——N
BY HERSELF.

Born with too much sensibility to enjoy ease,
With high ideas of perfection which I cannot attain,
With understanding enough to feel I have too little,

¹ Stenhouse, iv. 126.

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Some strong beats from my heart misguide my head,
And I yield more to impulse than to reason.
More guided by compassion than by duty,
More hurt by pride than by remorse,
Experience hath taught me to conceal my errors,
But neither the Bible hath taught me to amend them,
Nor David Hume to be easy under them.
If I am never to be better and happier than I am,
I had better never been.

ANOTHER OF THE SAME, BY LORD ALEMORE.

(See pp. 100-104).

Born with too much fickleness ever to enjoy the present,
With the highest ideas of perfection to which I have
fully attained,
With so much understanding that I can get no improve-
ment,
And, trusting too much to my head, misguided my heart,
I am moved more by whimsie than by reason,
More guided by passion than by duty.
Too much supported by pride to yield to remorse,
Hypocrisy has enabled me to conceal my errors ;
But neither hath the Bible taught me to dread a future
state,
Nor David Hume to be indifferent about it.
As I can neither be better nor happier than what
I am,
I must be shocked at the thought of not to be.

Notwithstanding several pious and evangelical
aspirations to be found in her will, and here and

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there in her letters, it is obvious that Mrs. Cockburn was far from being an orthodox Calvinist. If in words she condemned the scepticism of her friend David Hume, it was in a tone of easy and familiar banter, not with the severity of an outraged believer. She confesses that Mr. Davidson, the minister of Galashiels, was right when he said she was 'not yet a Christian'; and in another letter she makes no secret of her disbelief in eternal damnation. That she was, however, imbued with a spirit of the deepest awe and reverence for the Creator and Sustainer of the universe is evident; and as her years increase, one may note a gradual approximation to the beliefs commonly professed in Scotland. Her reigning quality was an indomitable gaiety of heart and mind, which no suffering or reverse could daunt. From her teens, when she revelled in the dance, to her fourscore years, when she gathered round her the wit and fashion of Edinburgh, her brightness never waned, nor was her natural force abated. Her sunny locks, dulled by no streak of grey even at eighty, are a figure of her perennial youth and wit shining undimmed to the very end. It is a pleasant revelation. It proves that in enlightened

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circles, Scotsmen and Scotswomen had already shaken themselves free of the gloomy and puritanic dogmas which weighed down the soul of Burns, until with 'clear-headed scorn' he burst his bonds asunder. She had what is sometimes termed in a deprecating way a 'pagan joy of life'; but that it should be pagan to be happy, and Christian only to be miserable, Mrs. Cockburn would never have admitted. Concerning her literary gift, it would be easy to say too much in praise. If she had not been fortunate in wedding fine words to fine music in 'The Flowers of the Forest,' it may well be doubted if her other rhymes would have preserved her memory. Neither her autobiography nor her memoir of Ambassador Keith has half the charm of her letters—written without reflection, even without common care. These give a vivid and instructive picture of society in Edinburgh just before the advent of her great relative, Sir Walter Scott. Perhaps, after all, it is the gossip letter in which she announced her discovery of the precocious boy that will longest keep her memory green. It is possible to imagine a day when even the 'Flowers of the Forest' may cease to be sung save in corners of the Forest itself; but to that remotest day,

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when the world shall cease to interest itself in the author of *Waverley*, some interest must always attach to the old lady whose bright perception noted in the child of six the marks of his future genius. Altogether, it was even a notable life. Endowed with beauty and with wit, she married early into an intellectual and polished society. She had her own adventure in the '45. She was closely concerned in some of the most striking social events of her generation—the affairs of Duke Hamilton, who married at midnight the beautiful Gunning, and the Douglas Cause, which divided the people more sharply and passionately than ever did party politics. Not only did she divine the genius of young Walter Scott, but she gave Burns the motive for his earliest rhyme, winning both his admiration and his friendship. She knew every man and woman worth knowing in the northern capital; and with one of the greatest, David Hume, seems to have been on terms of intimate and familiar acquaintance.

A SHORT ACCOUNT OF A LONG LIFE

*[Mrs. Cockburn's Memoir of her own life, written
10th May 1784, and dedicated to the Rev.
Mr. Douglas of Galashiels.]*

A SHORT account of a long life full of vicissitudes! Human life is ever interesting to human creatures, for we are all subject to the same joys, passions, griefs, pains, and dissolution!

Born in the year 1713, 29th September, old stile, the youngest of a numerous family, and coming unexpectedly seven years after my Mother had bore children, I was the little favourite of all the family. My Mother dyed when I was ten years old. My Father and sisters doated on me. I was carressed in childhood, and indulged in youth. My eldest sister became my Mother, she was fourteen years older than me; she it was who formed my taste for reading, which has ever since been my greatest amusement. I cannot recollect ever being taught to read, I suppose I

was begun so early and so easily that I never got a formal lesson ; and my Father taught me arithmetick the same way.

My education was with the politest Lady of the age, who had me as a boarder ; and I had Dancing, French, etc., in the common course. Musick I would not go to, as I was disgusted with hearing some Misses who had been taught to squal horribly. As my preceptress (for whose memory I retain the utmost veneration) found me averse to the needle, she made me read to the family, and her sensible remarks has been of use to me thro' Life. She always said Girls sow'd naturally, and as she saw I never loved to be idle a moment, and would not have patience to do *nothing*, she was sure I would work enough, which is true. As I grew up I was thought handsome ; my chief beauty was fair hair (then in fashion), fine teeth, a fresh complexion, a good dancer, and very agile ; apt to blush (which fair people always are), and these were all my personal perfections. I was early connected with the best families by intimacy at school, and some of my most steady friends thro' Life were my childhood companions. At seventeen years a beloved Brother dyed : my first grief was violent, as nature never afforded me

the relief of tears. It cost me a fever and a quensy, to which I was subject ever after. In that year I had several matrimonial as well as dancing Lovers :—to *one* I gave my hand and heart. We lived loving and beloved for twenty-two years. No body kept a house of more resort. No body more in the gay world. Our whole income was £150 a year, and we never owed a shilling. An only beloved Son was educated to be a phisician—went thro' all the Coledges. A young nobleman (*a*) took a most uncommon attachment to my husband, and intreated him to take charge of his estate of £10,000 a year, and would have no Cautioner. We accordingly went to his Palace, where my husband proved a 'blessing to Many. £200 a year sallery, with free house and coal, made us to send our son abroad, tho' my heart dyed within me to part with him. I acquiesced indeed, as I was fully assured of his Father's tenderness being equal to mine, and his understanding much superior. I never in my life disputed a point but in sport, and to display my powers of argument on the wrong side of the question, a sort of sport he often led me into for his amusement. I almost forget to mention a memorable part of my life: we lived four years

with his venerable Father (*b*), during which time I was as much married to a man of four score as to one of twenty-three, for it was my highest ambition to gain the heart and approbation of the Father, as to secure the affections of the son. And indeed I found the one was the most essential means of doing the other: my husband adored me for my unremitting attention to his Father, and I was fully rewarded for intirely quitting the scenes of publick admiration by being truly beloved and admired at home. The good old man's affection for me was infinitely more pleasing than all the adulation I ever met with, and I still remember it with pleasure.

I was married March 25th, 1730 (*c*); bore my son 15 May 1732. When he was fit for school, we gave up living in Edinburgh, and lived five years in a country town, where there was a good master. We lived in family with my beloved mother-sister; at the removal of the master, we boarded our son with him at Edinburgh. Let me with pride record an uncommon bit of friendship my husband performed. He had a near relation who had been long his intimate friend: his affairs were in great disorder, and was in hazard of being obliged to sell his estate, (which) had been many

hundred years in the family. Mr. Cockburn lifted all his stock, prevented the sale; and as he knew *he* only could check the bad management of his friend, we went and lived with him till affairs were in a proper train. With some difficulty he recovered his money, and we then settled in Edinburgh to attend our son at Colledges; there we remained as happy as human beings can be. I can only remember one deep grief I sustain'd in these happy years, it was the death of my Brother's lamented and beloved Wife, who dyed in child-bed, December 18th, 1737. The only vent I had was a violent bleeding of the nose.

It was in the year 1750 we went to the charge of the Ducal estate: it would look like vanity to say how much we were beloved in a Country where we were strangers. The Duke engaged to live abroad five years, and restrict his expenses to £4000 a year. This both his health worn out with *Dissipation*, and his estate by *Extravagance*, required: and Mr. Cockburn would not undertake the management without an absolute promise (upon honour), that he would do so. Just as things were in a train, and a load of debt clearing, in less than two years the Duke returned; and

with three guineas in his pocket, and not credit to raise £20, he married a young beauty without a shilling. He wrote to his friend begging Credit and pardon ! What was to be done ? Mr. Cockburn and Mr. Stewart sent a Credit for £30,000 : no less would do ; and they became bound for that sum (for the Heir of an Entailed Estate). The Duke, intoxicated with beauty, forgot friendship, and let the man who saved his life by sending him abroad, for he went to London on purpose and saw him ship'd off ; who also saved his forfeiture of titles and estates by preventing his joining the rebels in the 1745 ; and by whose credit alone he could come home to his own house, shift for himself to find a place to live in, tho' often wrote to about it. We must have taken some paltry house in the village, or left the affairs altogether, if a worthy and excellent old Batchelor had not taken us and our domesticks into his house in the neighbourhood, where we boarded : and the old man said, had we always staid with him gratis, he had been a rich man ; for he added that, by living gratis himself most of his life in the family of Hamilton, he had contracted forty thousand marks of debt. Indeed I found him, as most single men are, most immoderately

cheated by his domesticks. Young men ! trust no Nobles ! Marry, be rich, be happy !

Here ends the First Chapter.

Now the scene changes, and after twenty-two years of uncommon happiness, I have to recount the sad reverse. But first ! let me bow in grateful thanks to the unerring Disposer of all events, who sent the staff along with the rod, who preserv'd my reason and the best use of it—resignation to his Will ! In the year 1753, my beloved husband was seized with a bowel complaint, for which all medicine proved vain : exercise, minerals—all was tryed. A medicine he could not endure any one but myself to administer, I have given at all hours of the night : and, as his fondness for me increas'd to such a pitch that I saw any other attendant than myself gave him pain, I never allow'd any to come near him. From a weak habit of body I grew strong and healthy by constant watching and perpetual anxiety. His disease was dreadfully painful, but his fortitude and patience were equal to it. He once told me he was going to a mineral in a foreign Country ; I ask'd when I should get ready. 'You are not to go with me now,' says he, 'it is too expensive

—I must go by myself.—I vow'd I would not stay behind.—‘Well, well, we shall see,’ and smiled. I afterwards knew his meaning: he wish'd to arm me for his Death. A niece of mine who had been educated with us, was too full of sensibility; and in a violent fit of pain (*I* of despair), she fell into an hysterick fit; and from that time till the day of her death never retain'd a bit of meat or medicine on her stomach. She was worn so weak as to be confin'd to bed; so that my toils and cares were doubled. On the 10th of March 1753, we left our excellent, kind Landlord with tears streaming from his venerable eyes. My Niece's father came for her; she was carried in a litter, laid round with hot bottles of water to keep her alive, which were renewed every stage. My Spouse and me in a carriage: slow and dismal was our journey; and, to complete it, we were cover'd with snow. We went to a house we had order'd to be hired and furnish'd at Musselburgh; which, in spite of much cleaning, was so full of fleas there was no sleeping. My Niece was carry'd to a Country house, where her mother and sisters came to attend her. Judge the state of my mind. But despair gave strength, and the desire of chearing my husband kept really

up my own heart: he had a horse and chair in which he air'd every day. The day before his death, he went to Edinburgh by himself, and told me he wou'd bring me a female Companion, as I needed one. Surely he knew what happened; he brought me Miss Violet Pringle. We had Rae the surgeon and Dr. Rutherford (*d*) every day, and found there Mr. Wood, a young man Mr. Cockburn took a fancy to. That very night the violence of the disease increas'd. Wood stay'd in the house. Mr. Cockburn, on whom were the sweats of death, beg'd me to lye down with him. Wood was in the room, but I strip'd instantly and was embraced in his cold wet arms with such affection, dearer than the first embrace. Nature was worn out, and I fell asleep.—He watch'd some minutes, and then bade me go to my own bed: I did so, and sleep was allow'd me. About 8 o'clock I got up and apply'd the usual remedy. He found all was over. He look'd to me and said, 'Alice! it has seized my heart, while I can speak, I will pray.' His words were—'O my God! preserve the dearest and the best of wives, and my dear Son!—help me, Alice!—Adam will be kind to you—go away.' He then thank'd Violet Pringle and bid Mr. Wood do the last offices, as

he knew I was incapable. Those moments are as fresh before me as on the 23rd of April, 1753. As his disease was never perfectly understood, I determined for the sake of his son to have the body opened. The mad impatience I had to have it performed was ridiculous; and certainly I had a secret hope that he might come alive. The next folly was that I should have no mournings, thinking I was immediately to follow; besides, having seen joyful hearts in weeds, I thought the Form below the sacredness of sorrow. My son arrived from France in a very short time. The pangs I felt when I saw him was unutterable.—Beautiful he was in his dress, and sad it made him, for he adored his father:—he lost in him father, friend, and conductor. As it was terrible to live in that house, I determined to board with a much beloved brother whose wife was sister to my spouse (*d* 2). My son, to perfect his medical studies, went to Holland. I remain'd a year in a sedate state of stupidity. As sleep had forsaken me, I endeavour'd to bring it back by fatigue, so got a heavy wheel to spin on: and if it was fair, walk'd on one hidden walk two hours every day. If I could not go out, I perform'd the same task in the house. I succeeded at last. I let my small

house furnish'd, and after a year, a house which was our property in Edinburgh being ill-used by one who rented it for some years, I went to it and had it almost new to furnish and to repair. My son return'd and lived with me:—both he and his friends thought our finances too straitned to pursue his business; and the offer of the present of a Cornetsy of Dragoons, which was worth £1000, made him determine to go into the Army. A severe present it was to me; but I was oblidge to go and thank the then President of the Session (e), who gave it, and who told me he was happy it was in his power to return obligations he owed to my son's Grandfather, who made his fortune. He went into the 11th regiment of Dragoons in the 1756 year of God. The clearing him out and paying all extraordinary expenses made it necessary to lift £500. Before he joined his regiment he made a will in my favours writ by his own hand, and, this instance as well as in every other of his life, behaved to me as a son and a friend. Alas! that *I* should be *his* heir! He went to join his regiment, and our house being too large, I sold it, and rented a house in the Castlehill (f) twelve years. At my going there, my sister-mother's (f2) only son, who

was to be bred to the Law, came to be my boarder. I had him several years at £18 a year. A pleasanter boy never was : a temper gentle as a female and very good sense ; happy for me to have a companion I was so fond of. Another resource from sorrow in my lot was a family (to whom I was obliged, and with whom we had lived many years in the most intimate friendship) attached me to them by every act of kindness in my deep distress ; so that I became in a manner one of the family. The mother, a most superior woman, was my model for wife and mother : the eldest son known and esteemed not only as the most agreeable man of the age, but of a larger share of genius than is common. As he was often for months afflicted with the gout, it became my pleasure and my business to amuse him ; and it pleased both my heart and my vanity to see I succeeded : so that I may say I lived with that family (g). No man had a greater taste for Belle Lettre, so that this amusement in instruction went hand in hand. In the year 1755 or 56, my dear sister was seized with a strange illness. Her ideas were darkened with the blackest melancholy. Tho' her understanding was not overturned, it was overwhelmed. She blamed herself for all

the miserys of human life, as if she had been the Tempter that caused the fall of man. Her reverys were full of horror: she saw war and blood-shed, shipwrecks and earthquakes, and moan'd over the miseries of mankind. If we interrupted her with any common question or discourse, she spoke with the same sense she always did, and slept sometimes ten hours at a time as sound as an infant. She retained no food; and never had a natural passage. I let my house in town and came to take care of her. In this melancholly period my son's regiment was ordered to Germany, and I lifted £200 I had of a legacy from my dear brother, whose death a year before was a second widowhood. I lent my son the money for field equipage, etc. How I was supported in this melancholly scene, my heart torn with anxiety for my son, and my nephew sent to Holand, so miserable and beloved an object for ever in my sight, that I look back with astonishment I outlived it; but the constant endeavour to comfort as to cure my dear sister gave my mind occupation, and internal prayer strengthen'd my spirit. A year past in this way; with a terror for every newspaper and for every battle. At last I was advised to change the scene with

her, and she was brought near to Edinburgh, and I went to my own house, where her son soon join'd me and past Lawyer, after which we were equal expences in house-keeping, which seldom exceeded £60 the piece. I was three years without seeing my son, tho' he was sent over to England to buy horses, and return again with them to Germany. During my sister's illness, she had many times told us she was to live in misery 15 years;—it was so, for she fell first ill in the 1755, and dyed in the year 1770, just in her seventieth year of her age. When her body was opened, they found the guts turn'd the wrong way; so that her torture was immense. But by her illness she escap'd a more poignant pain than the body can feel. In the 1768 or 69, my Nephew began to grow discontent with his business. He did not come on in the Law; and his uncle and he projected buying an uncultivated estate, so as to give him occupation of mind and body. As I was sure they must borrow money for the purchase, and more for a precarious improvement, I oppos'd it as much as possible, to no effect. The purchase was made. In a year's time they found the ruin that was to ensue. A deep melancholly seized him; and

the agonies I suffered by daily witnessing deep despair is inexpressible! One night he show'd me an opium bottle (L. Laudnum bottle), and ask'd me if drinking that would not cure all heartaches. I assured him it would not, and took it from him, tho' really I was not so much alarm'd as I had cause to be the very next morning, being the King's birth, month of June. We just (had) removed to a house not half ready; and in the utmost confusion. He got up by five in the morning, took a pistol he had ready, and lodged a ball in his head. As he found it had not the effect, he fired another which went deeper, but did not kill. How I did not hear the report I know not, but I had layn in an agony of horror without knowing why: so that when the dreadful deed was told me, I only ask'd if he was dead. When I found he was not, I went to him directly; but trembled so I could scarce walk. He ask'd my pardon, embraced me, and cry'd in my arms—dreadful was the scene altogether; and I thought I should have dyed of the pain he suffer'd in extracting the balls. In spite of his numerous relations and my wide connections, the unhappy affair never was heard of. For 40 days he was confin'd to bed and I to the

house; it passed for a fever: and were both together visiting our friends in the town without the least suspicion. His mind seem'd more serene: his temper, always kind and placid, felt more for me than for himself. Much discourse we had, and I endeavoured to prevent his looking on that fatal action as so very disgraceful as it appear'd to him. Such is the power of custom: what a Roman gloried in, a Briton thought most contemptible. I must mention a circumstance so strange that it deserves remark: on the very hour on which he shot himself, his mother, who always slept with the gentlewoman who had the care of her, fell a trembling and crying thro' her sleep, crying out, 'my son, Oh horror, blood, blood!' Her woman had much ado to wake her. She would not tell her dream, but repeated 'horror, horror,' and sent her in next day to enquire after her son and me. She was told he was in a fever—his mother seem'd not distressed with it. After he was well and had a wig, she came and saw him: and he frequently saw her. She got out of her miserable body much about her birthday, and I observed his spirits did not stand any sort of shock: he was confused and perturb'd. He had fitted up a room at his country

place, and after burying his mother, went frequently there.

Whilst I was mostly with my friends in the country, a curious affair happen'd me, which might have excited vanity, had not I foreseen that by finding a Lover I should lose a Friend. Happening to be more than commonly residing near an old and intimate Friend I had known from my earliest years, and lived in intimacy with all my married life, he grew uncommonly fond of me. I was not surprised, as we had been always on an intimate and friendly footing. For 12 years the fondness increas'd; and at last produced what I had always forseen, tho' I endeavour'd all I could to turn passion back to friendship, and thought (vainly) I had address enough to make it good. This was one additional vexation unknown to many well-known, and severely felt—let me drop a veil over the foibles of a friend and my own presumption. I was in my 57th year when this affair commenced. My poor Nephew's melancholly began to return; and the year after the first attempt on his life, he ended it in the same manner. Luckily for me, my son was here with his regiment. He managed me with tender-

ness: burned a long letter my Nephew had wrote to me the night before his death. He said it served no purpose, but to wound me deeper, which was needless. He carried me out to Ayr, to my most beloved and intimate friends, where I gathered some strength of body and mind. I had, a year before my Nephew's death, purchased, by my son's consent, the house I now reside in (*h*), and got it fitted up for him to live with me, which greatly contributed to recover my health. He was order'd to his regiment, and I passed much of my time amongst my friends, of whom were a few intimates in youth and sincere friends thro' life—heaven blest me with a few remaining. On his return home, he was seized with a violent stomatick illness, which confined him long; and, tho' he was remarkable for fortitude, at last confined him to bed. Tho' he partly lost the power of both hands and feet, his spirits never sank; and he enjoy'd a book as his friend, in that situation, without fretfulness or impatience. Tho' always a plain dresser, he was finical in cleanliness, and was shifted, shaved, and dress'd every day in bed. A melancholly prospect it was to me to think my son at middle life should be cut off from action, and must no longer be a

member of society. But his spirit kept up mine, and I only beg'd of God to continue that blessing, while I should be content to employ all the rest of my life in attending and amusing him. He took a resolution to go to Harrogate, and tho' very lame, went by himself, and there perfectly recover'd. But, alarm'd for fear of the return of his malady, he sold his Commission, and came home. A strong and early attachment to a family where his Cusin (almost his sister by habitude) had been the Wife and Mother, made him from their infancy doat upon her children. My intimacy with the father (*i*) lasted many years, nor did the death of my Niece alter, but rather increased it. He was fond of my son from a boy, and he again lov'd no man so well. The intimacy betwixt the families, always together, brought about an event which proved fatal to me. The fondness my son had for the children of his beloved Cusin soften'd into the stronger passion for her Daughter; and *she* loved him with the utmost sincerity and tenderest affection: there could be no reserve where habitual intimacy dwelt. I was quite a stranger to this, and never imagined she had seen him in any other light than an uncle: they never told me till they

should try her father ; and she gave a proof of her affection stronger than could be expected from youth and timidity. She would not let him speak to her father, but took it on herself to assure him the happiness of her life depended on his consent. He had been a most indulgent father : so much the more severe was it on her to receive the utmost abuse, with orders never to see or think of her Cusin more. I was in the Country at this time, and when I came in I found my son thoughtful—not melancholly. He soon told me all that had pass'd ; but her love for him was a comfort. Tho' our finnances were not great, yet our Capital was rather increased than when his Father and I were married ; and as her Mother's portion was £2000, and she the only younger child of the marriage, I saw no distress in the affair. I wrote to my old Friend to tell him so ; as also that the lives of them depended on their union. Indeed he had reason to see it, for his Daughter grew very ill, so as to alarm him, and to call a phisician. His answer was such as to rouse my resentment and contempt ; so that I hardly felt a pang for determining never more to see, to speak to, nor think of a man whom I had loved for thirty years with sincere

affection, and whose life I had saved by my care and attention. Mean time I did all I could to encourage the lovers : and many happy hours they had walking by themselves planning schemes of life ; but she was still firm not to marry without her father's consent. I saw they were both to be miserable and separated ; I therefore offered every thing in my power to join them. At last a day was set ; and I was prepared to see them wedded. She came dress'd in black ; he challenged it ; and she desired to speak to him alone : they were two hours together. She came to me all in tears, and bid me go and comfort my son. He needed it indeed ! They had bid a final adieu. After this he plunged into dissipation. He did everything to recover his spirits, to no purpose. To be affronted and ill used by the man on earth he loved most, to see his dear Girl miserable, was too much ; and the distress I was in made it worse. His health got a shock. A violent bleeding at the nose, for which he would do nothing, was succeeded by a cough so violent as to make him throw up blood ; yet he would not draw blood (*j*). I cannot recollect the time of this dismal period. My constant apprehensions took up my mind so much, I forgot all

times and seasons. Yet he kept up spirits, try'd Goat's Whey, grew weaker every day—but I sicken and can go no farther now. The death-bed scene was severe; and the very day before he dy'd he sent for me and order'd his funeral; also to be buried and dress'd. How I am alive I know not, after losing the care and comfort of my whole life. After the last parting with his Child, he never spoke of her but once, which was to say he esteem'd her more than ever. She was in town after he was wanting, and ask'd to see him; but he shun'd her; and when he made a will in her brother's favour, I knew it must not—the delicacy prevented. Fain I would have ask'd him if he had anything to say to me, but fear of agitating him prevented me.

When our father's affairs came out, he said that condemn'd to him all his behaviour; that considering his circumstances was the reason of it, and forgiv'd him most sincerely.

I have thus mark'd the chief occurrences of my varied life. Nothing remains but to thank, with a grateful heart, the Merciful Disposer of all events for preserving my reason under such various feelings as he form'd me with; and to pray that the closing scene may be render'd



ANNE PRINGLE.
after D. Knapp, Boston.

times and seasons. Yet he kept up spirits, try'd Goat's Whey, grew weaker every day—but I sicken and can go no farther now. The death-bed scene was severe; and the very day before he dyed he sent for me and order'd his funerals; also he was shaved and drest. How I am alive I know not, after losing the care and comfort of my whole life. After the last parting with his Cousin, he never spoke of her but once, which was to say he esteem'd her more than ever. She was in town after he was wasting, and ask'd to see him; but he shun'd her; and when he made a will in her brother's favour, I knew it meant her—the delicacy prevented. Fain I would have ask'd him if he had anything to say to her, but fear of agitating him prevented me.

When her father's affairs came out, he said that explained to him all his behaviour; that concealing his circumstances was the reason of it, and pity'd him most sincerely.

I have thus mark'd the chief occurrences of my various life. Nothing remains but to thank, with a grateful heart, the Merciful Disposer of all events for preserving my reason under such accute feelings as he formed me with; and to pray that the closing scene may be render'd





serene, thro' the influence and intercession of the blessed Saviour.

To you, my young friend, I dedicate these sheets, which are improper for any eye but those of a partial friend. May God reward you for your exact and kind attention to me and my affairs. Amen.

10th May 1784.

In her will, which was 'given up' by Mark Pringle of Clifton and Alexander Keith, W.S., her executors, and confirmed 23rd Jan. 1795, Mrs. Cockburn left property to the amount of £3800, the bulk of which went to two nieces, Anne Pringle and Mrs. Simpson. She mentions some of her poorer relations in affectionate terms, and leaves them small annuities; and frequently alludes to her son, who predeceased her. She left a lock of her hair for two hair-rings for 'my earliest and most constant and affectionate friends, Mrs. Keith of Ravelston and her brother, William Swinton.' A ring with Sir Hugh Dalrymple's hair, intended for Mrs. Dalrymple, is now to be given to her son, Sir Hugh Dalrymple, 'for whom Mrs. Cockburn has great affection.' 'I promised Mrs. Walter Scott (Sir Walter's mother) my emerald ring, with it she has my prayers for her and hers, much attention she and her worthy husband paid me in my hours of deepest distress, when my son was dying.' She desires that her sister Fair-

nillie, if she outlives her, may have twenty pounds for mourning, besides the ring already mentioned ; 'and also I leave her the charge of my favourite cat.' She gives directions about her funeral, and adds, 'Shorten or correct the epitaph to your taste' (see p. 163). She was buried, not by the side of her husband, but in Buccleuch Parish Churchyard by the side of her son. A very plain tombstone which marks the spot has the following simple inscription :—

TO
THE MEMORY OF
MRS. ALISON RUTHERFURD,
Widow of PATRICK COCKBURNE, Esq., Advocate,
who died 22 Novr. MDCCXCIV,
and of her son,
CAPTAIN ADAM COCKBURNE,
who died 22 August MDCCCLXXX.

These lines are kept well to the top of the stone, and a large space is left underneath, as if for an epitaph. But, alas for the constancy of mourning friends, no epitaph, either 'shortened or corrected,' has ever been added.

NOTES TO MEMOIR

(a).—James, 6th Duke of Hamilton, b. 1724, d. 1758, having married in 1752 Elizabeth, younger of the two beautiful Miss Gunnings. Horace Walpole thus describes the incident :—
'The event that has made most noise since my last is the extempore wedding of the youngest of

the two Gunnings, who have made so vehement a noise. About six weeks ago Duke Hamilton, hot, debauched, extravagant, and equally damaged in his fortune and his person, fell in love with the youngest at a masquerade, and determined to marry her in the spring. About a fortnight since, at my lord Chesterfield's, Duke Hamilton made violent love at one end of the room, while he was playing at pharaoh at the other end: that is, he saw neither the bank nor his own cards, which were of £300 each. He soon lost a thousand. Two nights afterwards, being left alone with her, while her mother and sister were at Bedford House, he found himself so impatient that he sent for a parson. The doctor refused to perform the ceremony without licence or ring; the Duke swore he would send for the Archbishop—at last they were married with a ring of the bed-curtain at half an hour after twelve at night at Mayfair Chapel.' He died in six years, and a twelvemonth later his widow married Colonel John Campbell, who became 5th Duke of Argyll. She was the mother of two Dukes of Hamilton and two Dukes of Argyll.

(*b*).—Contemporary opinion does not speak so kindly as his daughter-in-law of the old Lord Justice-Clerk. As one of the commissioners to inquire into the massacre of Glencoe, he became so unpopular that he wrote to Mr. Carstairs complaining of the 'lies raised against him,' and particularly of the Earl of Argyle, who in turn complained of the authority given to the Lord

Justice-Clerk 'to seize persons, horses, and arms, make close prisoners or otherwise as he sees fit.' He is described, when he was fifty years old, as 'a bigot to a fault, and hardly in common charity with any man out of the verge of presbytery ; but otherwise a very fine gentleman in his person and manners, just in his dealings, with good sense, and of a sanguine complexion.' Dr. Houston, however, speaks unfavourably of him. He says : 'Of all the (Whig) party, Lord Ormiston was the most busy and zealous in suppressing the rebellion (1715) and in oppressing the rebels, so that he became universally hated in Scotland, where they called him the curse of Scotland ; and when ladies were at cards playing the nine of diamonds, commonly called the curse of Scotland, they called it the Justice-Clerk.' He died in 1735, in the seventy-ninth year of his age.

(c).—In the Ormiston Parish Register, the date of the marriage is 12th March 1731—no doubt correctly. The year 1730 in the *ms.* must be a mistake of the copyist, and the difference in the days of the month possibly represents the period between proclamation and marriage.

(d).—Dr. Rutherford was Sir Walter Scott's maternal grandfather. The 'young man' must have been the eminent surgeon who, in his old age, under the cognomen of 'Kind old Sandy Wood,' is represented in Kay's portraits passing along the North Bridge with an umbrella under his arm—he having been the first person in Edinburgh to make use of one. After taking his diploma, he

first settled at Musselburgh, where Mr. Cockburn died. When, having proposed for the hand of Miss Veronica Chalmers, he was asked by her father how he was going to support her, Wood answered by producing his lancet-case. 'Vera is yours,' said the old gentleman. He had the distinction of being named in a fragmentary parody of *Childe Harold* printed in *Blackwood's Magazine* for May 1818, and is also alluded to in a spirit of playfulness and affection in a prophecy put into the mouth of Meg Merrilees. Sir Alexander Boswell wrote a warmly appreciative epitaph on the Doctor.

(d 2).—Patrick Cockburn's sister Anne married Sir John Inglis of Cramond. Of six sons, one was the Peter Inglis of these letters; and of six daughters one, married to Sir John Clerk of Penicuik, was no doubt 'Niece Clerk' so often mentioned.

(e).—The Lord President who gave such prompt proof of his gratitude was Robert Craigie of Glendoick, who, passing advocate in 1710, attained by slow and laborious industry to the highest rank in his profession.

(f).—The new house was in Blair's Close. In the gable of a house at the lower end of the quadrangle, and directly facing the Castle, there still remains a cannon-ball said to have been fired from the half-moon battery in 1745. Blair's Close is a narrow alley through this building. The house Mrs. Cockburn occupied was the property of her friends, the Bairs of Newbyth, and is

28 SHORT ACCOUNT OF A LONG LIFE

described in a disposition by Sir Robert (1694) as 'my lodging in the Castle Hill of Edinburgh formerly possessed by the Duchess of Gordon,' whose coronet, supported by deerhounds, was over the doorway.

(f 2).—Her eldest sister Katherine, Mrs. Swinton, fourteen years her senior, who, on the death of their mother, became a mother to Alison, then only ten years old.

(g).—Seems to point to the family of John Pringle, Lord Haining, and his wife, Ann Murray of Philiphaugh, whose son Andrew Pringle, Lord Alemoor, was much troubled with gout (see pp. 100-4).

(h).—'The neat first floor of a house in Crichton Street, with windows looking along the Potterrow.'—Chambers's *Traditions of Edinburgh*.

(i).—John Pringle of Crichton, who had married Mrs. Cockburn's niece, Anne Rutherford, heiress of Fairnilee. Their daughter Anne was the object of Captain Adam Cockburn's love. *The Scottish Nation* (III. 308) mentions that John Pringle continued to be engaged extensively in commercial pursuits till the house with which he was connected became bankrupt. He was then forced to part with his lands in Midlothian, and his father-in-law, Mr. Rutherford of Fairnilee, being involved along with him, had to sell some of his estates.

(j).—It is not very clear whether this means that Adam was averse to being bled by a surgeon, or that he was of too pacific a disposition to draw blood himself.

LETTERS

I.

TO MISS CUMMING (*a*).

4th January 1760.

SUN, that ariseth on a New Year granted once more to the mortal race of man, arise propitious! Let thy rays cheer the heart and fortify the nerves of my little Sylph! Warm and benign like thine are the emanations of her soul. Luminous and true as thy light are the images of her fancy. Deep and dark as thy shadows at eve is her memory of times that are past. But thy midday beam drives the phantoms afar off, and she shines in the lustre of true benevolence. She shall live, O Sun, when thy influence is no more! When the firmament in which thou presidest shall be as a parchment roll—when the elements shall cease, and all inanimate matter shall return to its original nothing, she shall live and rejoice in her course, every moment arising nearer to Infinite perfection, perfectly restored to the

likeness of that Original of whom and for whom
she was !

Come, rosy health, and deck the cheek ;
Come, gentle peace, of spirit meek,
Come, every fancy, new shapes taking,
Make gay the scene, asleep or waking.
Come, Melody, on soft air fleeting,
Attend my Sylph with gentle greeting !

And far be household care and strife,
And hopeless love, the bane of life ;
All jealous fears, all heartfelt sorrow,
All anxious cares about to-morrow.

Little Sylph, that walks unseen
On the ice-besprinkled green,
Of mind elate, of stature small,
Though small yet great, though short yet tall,
Send to heaven thy matin song,
Softly sweet the notes prolong,
And beg thy friend from toils may cease,
And close this year her eyes in peace.

There, then, Miss Melpomene has thought fit
to go to bed for an afternoon nap, and she will
not give me another line, so you must even
take prose for the rest. . . . Make for me the
compliments of the season to all, especially
the patriarch (*b*). May he live a thousand
years, and more ! Blessing to all the bairns and
mothers ; long may they dance together ! I hope

Lady Dalrymple will dance at Anne's wedding.
. . . Adieu, my dear Henefie. Fourth day of
the year 60.

(a).—Lady Anne Lindsay describes Miss Cumming as 'a young woman, or rather a young lady, to whom I dare hardly, even at this moment, give the title of our governess. She was a being so perfectly fantastic, unlike to others, and wild, that, when Nature made her, she broke the mould.' Lady Balcarres had found her painting butterflies in the garret of her aunt's house in Edinburgh, and weeping because she was not placed in the sphere of life for which she was formed. 'She sang sweetly, wrote and worked well, and my mother, amused with the variety of her uncultivated talents, formed the plan of putting into her hands as governess the care of the persons, manners, accomplishments, and morals of her daughters. At first Henrietta had her mess with my mother's maid—tears flowed, she starved herself; and, to make her happy, she was permitted to dine with the family. The proposal to give her £20 per annum nearly cost Henrietta her life—as an act of friendship she was ready to take care of us, but her soul spurned emolument. Behold her then settled at Balcarres—the least little woman that ever was seen for nothing, fantastic in her dress and naïve in her manners, her countenance pretty, her shape neat and nice. In that casket was lodged more than Pandora's

box contained of powers of every kind—powers of attaching, powers of injuring, powers of mind, powers of genius, magnanimity, obstinacy, prejudice, romance, and occasionally enthusiastic devotion.’ She seems to have enjoyed in a remarkable degree the confidence of Mrs. Cockburn, who commonly addressed her as Henny or ‘Sylph.’ To her brother, a herald in the Lyon Office, Miss Cumming wrote beseeching him to make up a tree of their family, ‘taking the utmost care to connect us with the family of A(ltyre), and proceeding from Fergus the First, King of Scotland. Let our grandfather match in the family of Dumbalach, and let us be related somehow to Lord Lovat, etc.’ This vain and not very scrupulous creature was married in 1771 to the Rev. James Fordyce, D.D., of London, a popular author and preacher, whose oratory and eloquence were of so high an order as to earn the approbation of David Garrick. Nothing could offer a greater contrast to Miss Henrietta Cumming’s letter begging for a spurious ancestry than Mrs. Fordyce’s pious and pathetic account of her distinguished husband’s illness and death (*Biographical Dictionary of Eminent Scotsmen*, ii. 375).

(b).—The ‘patriarch’ was James, 5th Earl of Balcarres. Lady Dalrymple was Lady Balcarres’s mother, and Anne was her granddaughter, the accomplished and beautiful Lady Anne Lindsay, whose lively Recollections of the family life at Balcarres may be read in the eighteenth chapter of *The Lives of the Lindsays*.

II.

c. 1762.

NOW for news. It is believed by everybody but Mrs. Baird that Ambassador Keith (*a*) is to be married immediately to Mally Cheape (*b*). He is certainly with her every forenoon, dressed like a goddess, his equipage waiting, and a perfect bare face about it. I think Anne is staggered and believes, as the devils do. It will disturb a fine society, and I am really vexed about it. I fear it is true.

(*a*).—See Mrs. Cockburn's memoir of Keith as 'Felix,' pp. 241, 254.

(*b*).—Miss Cheap was a daughter of Mr. George Cheap, of the Cheaps of Rossie in Fife, whose wife, an aunt of the Lord Chancellor Wedderburn, died, leaving him six sons and two beautiful daughters. Mally was the first love of 'Jupiter' Carlyle, who confesses she kept entire possession of his heart from 1735 till 1753 'by means of her coquetry and my irresolution. In beauty she would have excelled most women of her time, had she not been the worst dancer in the world, which she could not be prevailed on to leave off, though her envious rivals laughed and rejoiced at her persevering folly. She was a great

mistress of conversation, having both wit and humour; and with an air of haughty prudery, had enough of coquetry to attract and retain her lovers, of whom she had many.' A young gentleman, to whom she had early inclined, was prevented from marrying her, and soon after fell at Fontenoy. She rejected Ambassador Keith rather than 'disturb a fine society.' (See Note to 'Felix,' p. 254.) 'Anne' mentioned in this letter is Keith's daughter, who lived to be one of Sir Walter Scott's greatest friends—the prototype of his 'Mrs. Bethune Baliol.'

III.

TO DAVID HUME.

[*Addressed on back—'For David Hume, Esq., at his Excellency's, Lord Hertford's, Paris.'*]

20th August 1764.

FROM the bleak hills of the north—from the uncultured daughter of Caledon—will the adored sage of France deign to receive a few lines? They come from the heart of a friend, and will be delivered by the hand of an enemy—which, O man of mode, is most indifferent to thee! Insensible thou art alike to gratitude or resentment—fit for the country that worships thee. Thou

art equally insensible to love or hate. A momentary applause, ill begot and worse brought up, an abortion, a fame not founded on truth, has bewitched thee, and thou hast forgot those who, overlooking thy errors, loved thy worth. Idol of Gaul, I worship thee not. The very cloven foot for which thou art worship'd I despise, yet I remember thee with affection. I remember that, in spite of vain philosophy, of dark doubts, of toilsome learning, God had stamped his image of benignity so strong upon thy heart that not all the labours of thy head could efface it. Idol of a foolish people, be not puffed up ! It is easy to overturn the faith of a multitude that is ready to do evil. An apostle of less sense might bring to that giddy nation Libertinism ! Liberty they are not born to ! This will be sent to you by your good friend Mr. Burnet, who goes much such an errand as you have given yourself through life, vizt., in search of truth ; and I believe both are equally impartial in the search, though, indeed, he has more visible interests for darkning it than ever you had. If, in the course of that enquiry, anything cast up that can satisfy my curiosity, and come sooner than the common course, I will demand this piece of luxury from you, as I am

certain I would give you the same pleasure, were it in my power. I had a letter lately from an old intimate of Sir John Stewart's (*a*), which I for your sake will transcribe. The gentleman is a man of the world and of undoubted understanding. The words are as follows :—

‘My old and (in the days of old) my very intimate companion hath made a strange sort of exit. I was much shocked at reading in the newspapers Sir John’s dying declaration. It was carrying the joke too far to be shuffling the truth and equivocating with his last breath. Andrew Stewart whom, notwithstanding all aspersions of the other part, I know to be a lad of as great veracity and uprightness as exists, told me that Madame Mignione, the mother, said to him there was something so *vif* in Sir John’s manner, and particular in his features, that she was positive, in spite of distance of time, she would know him again.’

Here comes what I mark for you :—

‘As his memory will not be savory, I hate to add blemishes to it, but I tell you in confidence that, tho’ he had neither intellects nor learning enough to expiscate the truth of so important a truth, I found out by a tête-a-tête conversation I

had with him a considerable time before the Duke of Douglas' death, that he had strongly imbibed the modern pernicious, tho' fashionable, doctrine of Materialism ; and had not the least belief of either good or evil spirits or of a future state. He told me at the same time that he lookd on a man as a fool who did not pursue his pleasures or his interests in this world.'

My author adds—'from this time I gave up all communication with him, and never saw him more.' I'm afraid this may prejudice you against my side of the question ; but, believe me, whatever prejudices you may have, I have one stronger ; and that is being the sincere friend and willing servant of Mr. Hume while A. COKBURNE.

It cannot add to your vanity to tell you that you are often remember'd in our cups (*b*) and in our conversations. You will hear that your tall cuz Miss Hume (Mary Hutchison's daughter) is now Countess of Hume (*c*). Most of our Misses pay dear for their coronets, as they are yet ignorant of the polite method of mending what is ammiss at Home. Everybody here is much as you left them. I am a little happier haveing my son with me at present. He would

be the better of being in France a while. A lady gave him for a toast, with a character which you will find below :—

A true merry heart with a brow most severe,
A humour sarcastick—a truth most sincere,
A boldness and true independance of spirit.
If the fellow were rich—O, he would have much merit!

CASTLEHILL, BAIRD'S CLOSS,
August 20th, 1764.

Compliments to Madam Bouflours (*d*).

(*d*).—Sir John Stewart's son was declared, by a decision of the House of Lords, lawful heir to the estates of the last Duke of Douglas. This Duke had an only sister, Lady Jane, one of the handsomest and most accomplished women of her age, whose engagement in early life to the Earl of Dalkeith, afterwards Duke of Buccleuch, was broken off. After rejecting many offers, she at last was persuaded, at the mature age of forty-eight, into a secret marriage with John, second son of Sir Thomas Stewart of Grandtully. They went to France, and, returning in three years, brought two male children of whom they declared Lady Jane had been delivered at one birth in July 1748, when she was in her fifty-first year. After a fruitless effort at reconciliation with her brother, Lady Jane went to London, leaving the boys in Edinburgh, where the younger died in 1753, his unhappy mother, destitute of even the common

necessaries of life, following him in six months. In 1759, her husband, who had been living mostly in a debtor's prison, succeeded to the baronetcy, and executed a bond in favour of the surviving boy, designating him as his own son by Lady Jane Douglas; and when the Duke died in 1761, young Stewart's guardians had him declared heir in Scottish form before a jury. But the guardians of the Duke of Hamilton, also a minor, contested the succession, asserting that one of the boys had been stolen soon after birth from parents of the name of Mignon, and the other from parents of the name of Sanry. After a long and exciting trial, which ranged the people of Scotland into two hostile parties, the famous Douglas Cause was in 1767 decided by eight to seven judges of the Court of Session against young Stewart. The Lords having reversed this verdict, he was raised to the peerage as Baron Douglas, and proved himself one of Nature's noblemen—exemplary in all the relations of life. Andrew Stewart mentioned in the letter was a young lawyer employed on the Duke of Hamilton's side to collect proof against Archibald Stewart being the son of Lady Jane Douglas. Sir John Stewart's dying declaration in 1764 that Archibald and his twin brother were born of Lady Jane, his lawful spouse, is what Mrs. Cockburn's friend declares to be 'shuffling the truth and equivocating with his last breath.' Writing to Dr. Blair in 1769, Hume is indignant at the decision of the House of Lords, and speaks of 'poor Andrew Stewart who has

conducted that cause with singular ability and integrity, and who was at last exposed to reproach, which unfortunately can never be wiped off.'

(b).—Among the traditional anecdotes of Hume's habits, one is that, going to sup with Mrs. Cockburn, and not arriving till after the choice of the good things had been consumed, when some effort was made to cater for him, he said, 'Trouble yourself very little about what you have, or how it appears; you know I am no epicure, but only a glutton.' These literary parties at Mrs. Cockburn's appear to have been frequent and agreeable. A gentleman still living (1846) was present at many of them when a youth, and particularly recollects one occasion when her son, coming home tipsy, locked himself in the room where the walking habiliments of the guests were preserved. A general borrowing of articles of clothing from surrounding neighbours took place, and those which fell to Hume and Lord Monboddo happened to produce a peculiarly ludicrous effect.—Hill Burton's *Life of Hume*, ii. 449.¹

(c).—Alexander, ninth Lord Home, a clergyman of the Church of England, had for the second of his three wives his cousin Marion, daughter of the Hon. James Home of Ayton. The philosopher, it will be remembered, changed the spelling of his name from Home, the old form, to Hume, the phonetic form—a change to which he made grimly humorous allusion in his will.

¹ Also *Traditions of Edinburgh*, pp. 72, 73.

(*d*).—Hippolyte de Saujon, wife of Comte de Boufflers-Rouvel, mistress of Prince Conti, and a very intimate friend of David Hume. See *Life of Hume*, ii. 90.

IV.

TO DAVID HUME.

Edinburgh, Castle Hill, Sept. 21, 1765.

MOST people, Mr. Hume, are proud of being thought to be well with the great, and often pretend it when it is not true. It's my misfortune to be known as your friend; and I am now almost reduced to wish that I had enjoyed that honour in a more private manner. But I know no blessing in life that is not attended with (almost) an equivalent of pain, and I must submit to plague you and *myself*, who of all things abhor asking favours. This will be delivered to you by Mr. Scot, who is travelling for his improvement. His father, who is a man capable of unbounded generosity and friendship, has been the friend of a man whom I most truly value, I mean Mr. Pringle of Haining, now member of parliament for Selkirkshire (*a*). Mr. Pringle writes to beg of me a line of introduction

for his young friend, who, he says, will have seen nothing if he has not seen Mr. Hume. His admiration of you was indeed independent of the French taste; and I believe he might have asked the same favour for his young friend had you been in Jack's Land or James's Court (*b*).

What notice you take of this young gentleman, then, Sir, shall be fairly stated to account; and though in your last you upbraid Scotland for taking no notice of your friend Lord Marischal, I must beg leave to say *I am* not Scotland, nor did you ever honour me so far as to propose introducing me to that nobleman. What's more, I really know that he shunned many who wished for his acquaintance, and therefore, Sir, you need not blame Scotland (*c*). Lord Marischal was entered into the infirmities of old age before he returned to his country; and at that time of life ease and quiet is preferable to popular visits. Indeed, my philosopher, I think you was not in good humour last time you wrote. The statesman prevailed, which is ever attended with a severity and distance. There was nothing in your letter pleased me but a wish to return to your native land, where I sincerely wish to see you, though not to dose or die, but to live and

laugh. I had a letter lately from a member of parliament, who told me he was to apply to you for a favour to a son of a friend of yours. I was heartily glad he did not put it upon me to ask this favour, for you will by-and-by look on me as a dun ; neither will I add anything farther on that subject, because, if you are not willing to serve that friend, I know not whom I write to. You are not the D. H. I know, and therefore I have no interest with you.

I am just returned from a Highland expedition, and was much delighted with the magnificence of nature in her awful simplicity. These mountains, and torrents, and rocks, would almost convince one that it was some being of infinite power that had created them. Plain corn countries look as if men had made them ; but I defy all mankind put together to make anything like the Pass of Gilicranky. Was you ever in the Highlands? Are you to remain in Paris? or do you go with Lord Hertford? (*d*) I wish you to go with him. I wish to break the hearts of all the Frenchwomen, if they have any hearts ; but I suspect, for all the adulation you have met with amongst them, that I am infinitely more your affectionate friend and servant,

A. COKBURNE.

Mrs. Hamilton is in Glasgow. I had a good laugh at her with your last letter, and the mention of a lover. I alleged her travels were not in vain, and that she had imbibed the manners of the country very fast. I was a week at Balcarres lately, where the old lord asked for you, admired you, disputed with you, confuted you, came over to your opinion; but had no faith when I told him you was tired of public life. ‘‘Ods fish, is the fellow a fool? what can a man of his talents do in a poor ruined country like this?’ Lady Balcarres goes with her twelfth child, ten of whom are living (e). Fife is in great commotion at present with candidates. Your friends John Hume, Willie Johnston, Sandy Wedderburn, Colonel Scot, all appeared. None keeps the field but Sir John Anstruther, and Mr. Alexander. I shall enclose you a ballad on the occasion. This is unconscionably long for a man of consequence. Once more, adieu.

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(a).—John Pringle, son of Lord Haining and brother of Lord Alemoor, both Lords of Session, was at one time a merchant in Madeira. He sat for the county from 1765 to 1786, when he accepted the Chiltern Hundreds, dying unmarried in 1792. His sister Anne, married to Mrs.

Cockburn's brother, is 'the Lady Fairnilee' of these letters.

(b).—To Jack's Land, a lofty stone tenement in the Canongate, Hume came from Riddel's Land, Lawnmarket, near the head of the West Bow, in 1753, while engaged on his *History of England*, nearly the whole of which work was written in Jack's Land. James's Court, a huge and lofty building at the south end of the Mound, was mostly destroyed by fire in 1858, its site being now partly occupied by Savings Bank and Free Church offices. From the Embassy at Paris Hume wrote to a friend in Edinburgh, 'I wish twice or thrice a day for my easy chair, and my retreat in James's Court. Never think, dear Ferguson, that as long as you are master of your own fireside and your own time you can be unhappy, or that any other circumstance can add to your enjoyment.'

(c).—For his share in the Jacobite rising of 1715, Earl Marischal had to escape to the Continent, his titles attainted, and his estates forfeited. Although actively employed till the year before in the Pretender's interest, he took no share in the '45, having gone to reside in Prussia. In 1750, Frederick the Great sent him as Ambassador to France, and later, when Prussian Ambassador to Spain, he discovered the Bourbon Family Compact, which he disclosed to the British Prime Minister. Being pardoned, he was graciously received by George II., and in 1764 he bought back part of his ancestral land, meaning

to settle in Scotland. But, responding to an earnest invitation from Frederick, he went back to Prussia, where he was loaded with honour and distinction, and known as 'the King's friend.' He died at Potsdam, unmarried, in 1778.

(*d*).—Lord Hertford, Ambassador at Paris, had been appointed Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland. Hume did not go with him.

(*e*).—James, Earl of Balcarres (who had spoiled his career by taking part with his father in the '15), was a grey, gaunt man of three-and-fifty when he married Miss Anne Dalrymple in her twenty-third year. She had refused him at first, but when she heard that, thinking himself near his end, he had left her half his fortune, she 'first endured, then pitied, then embraced,' becoming the mother of eleven children—Mrs. Cockburn says twelve. One of them was the bright and gentle Lady Anne Barnard, who wrote 'Auld Robin Gray,' and thus, like her friend Mrs. Cockburn, achieved immortality by one song.

V.

TO MISS HENRIETTA CUMMING.

1765..

YOUR Highland expedition entertained me as much as St. Pierre's visit to the mountains of Switzerland. I'm not sure whether you or Rousseau writes best. Were I to return

adventure for adventure I'm not sure but I would equal you. The variety of people and characters I have seen and lived among for six months afforded me agreeable observations. The works of God have all some affinity ; and, sure, Taste is and always must be the same, for truth is one. I join with you in adoring nature. There are some noble minds like your'mountains that the heat cannot melt nor the rains dissolve. Fixt they stand in all weathers, and, though rough perhaps to appearance, are indeed friends most permanent and unshaken. Others, smooth and even, like verdant meads that tempt the traveller, prove nought but faithless bogs ; and slump you go every step.

VI.

TO MISS HENRIETTA CUMMING.

Fairmalec, Autumn, 1765 (?)

THE moon was eclipsed three or four hours ago. As if she rejoiced again she shines with redoubled splendour. She shews the embosomed mountains that surround this spot, and the blue stream that runs circular around it.

The half-naked oak is seen again in the small pond on whose brink he grows, and the tall giants look like shadows on the smooth-shaven green. Happy the mind that resembles this night—clear, light, and serene. Who can behold this midnight scene without feeling what I cannot describe? Good-night.

The storm has desolated the trees: the ground is strewn with their fallen honours. I don't talk of the weather because I have nothing to say, but because I sit in a closet that is just in the garden, and shows me the scene. I feel myself greatly resemble those stripped trees—year after year has robbed me of my shelter and my foliage—but this is melancholy.

Here comes a secret I wrote to a young farmer, a lad very like one in *The Gentle Shepherd*. He has been severely in love with a country coquette for some years, and she keeps him on till he is become the subject of much vulgar mirth—for few can pity that passion:—

A RECEIPT FOR WOOING.

If your lass is coquettish and frisky,
Make up to her easy and briskly—
If she frown on ye, turn on your heel.

Make love to another, your heart to recover,
You'll quickly discover she'd keep you her lover,
Though her heart be as hard as the steel.

She will try all her tricks to entice ye,
Sometimes sweet, sometimes sour, sometimes spicy!
Affect all these humours yourself.
See that ye vex her, be sure to perplex her,
Provoke her and coax her, roast her and toast her,
She's as sure in your pouch as your pelf.

If your lassie is modest and shy,
Watch every cast of her eye;
If she blushes she's halfings your own.
Approach by degrees, her hand ye may seize,
And give it a squeeze, then down on your knees,
And prefer to kings or their crown!

If she answer you no way but flying,
Depend on't she will be complying,
So follow as fast as you can.
But if coldly she stay, I'm afraid she'll say 'Nay.'
With such nymphs it's the way; then fast as ye may
Pray pack up your heart and be gone—
Ye may leave her to some other man!

VII.

TO DAVID HUME (at Mr. Coutts in the Strand,
London).

1st February 1766.

THOUGH I declare before God and man that

I am a Christian, in faith only, I mean, (for in practice far short,) yet I do forgive you all your sins of omission ; only, indeed, because you have taken care of my Rousseau. You are tolerably good at drawing characters ; and I am so proud of finding the author, who alone had the key of my heart, resemble *my heart*, that I am certain you for once drew from the life. In every article I am him, (*a*) except peevishness, which, God willing, men oppressing, and time serving, may bring about. A feeling heart is apt to sour ; a cool philosopher who has no guide but reason, no aim but truth, no passions, no follies, but love of fame, (a breath blown over his tomb,) cannot possibly grow peevish. They only live for *their* sort of eternity ; which we people of fancy, of warmth and imagination,—we who believe in higher scenes of existence, we epicures, who never

will cease from ideas of enjoyment, indulge in : we grow impatient, we do not meet with that perfection we are born with the ideas of, and we grow peevish for want of them ; we forget we are in the nursery, and long for the dining-room. This is my Rousseau's case, and will soon be mine. In the mean time I am as jealous as *he* ; that any body should pay for my bills. At the same time, sir, I never paid any man a higher compliment than I did you, by being truly angry at you. Infidel as you are, (and little, indeed, do I expect from any such,) (*b*) I marked you down as a man whom God had chosen to show his power upon ; and that he had compelled you to act as a Christian, in spite of your contradiction. To set an opportunity of serving ME, I own astonished me ; and I had all the anger a friend ought to have. I have not been at courts. My heart is yet simple, though I have lived long amongst men. I said to myself, had David's son been in my power ! I felt what I would have done. I had no indolence, no prudence, and I am apt to suppose my friends of the same make with myself ; that is an error, however, I daily mend of, and by and bye I shall be as much wrapped up in my own shell, as I see all the reptiles around me are.

Your answer, however, satisfies me ; and I still believe (because it pleases me to believe) that you would have served me, had it been in your power. I have sent my son your letter, and now I must transcribe a passage from his, which I would send entire, if there was not a little family history in it, not our own.

‘If ever you write to D. Hume, you may ask his opinion of the following supposition,—Suppose the son of a friend who had been long dead or absent were presented to us, it is evident that this object would immediately revive its correlative idea, and recall to our thoughts all our past intimacies and familiarities, in more lively colours than they would have otherwise appeared to us.—Hume’s *Essays*, page 88, vol. ii.’

He adds, ‘were I sure his ideas remained the same, I should go to London and be presented to him.’ So much for quarrels and family business. I am glad to hear from your sister, there is no if’s of your coming to Scotland. I am glad, even that you, infidel as you are, have chased the gospel out of James’s Court (c). But what shall we do with you? you are spoiled ; it’s impossible for me to retain you. I am a Christian. I neither paint nor fricassee. My wit is much

abated, but I can play at quadrille and sleep with you. Will that do? Lord bless you, bring Rousseau here. Trees to shelter him! such nonsense; there's as many trees in Scotland as would hang all the rogues in England, every man his tree. Tell him that, and he won't be afraid of want of shelter. Sweet old man, he shall sit beneath an oak and hear the Druid's songs. The winds shall bring soft sounds to his ear, and our nymphs with the songs of Selma shall remember him of joys that are past (*d*). O bring him with you; the English are not worthy of him; I will have him! I cannot speak to him, but I know his heart, and am certain I could please it. This is a high pitch of vanity, but I am sure of it; and it's the only coquetry I am mad about. Were Voltaire to call at my door, I would say, I will not see him. Bring my dear old Rousseau; I am sure he is like my John Aikman (*e*). Bring yourself, however, as fast as you can, because just now we have a fancy for you. You are new, and we grow impatient. If ye stay long, you will grow stale like the conjuror or the Douglas Cause. If you are not French enough to forget old friends, you will rejoice with me that cousin Baird is as happy as one can be, separated from

the lover of her youth, the friend of her heart, and the father of her children * he has taken all care of her, and she and the children * in real affluence. O, rich she is, indeed, in such a fine family. I look on her as a great patriarch, monarch, and mother to a whole people. No Hepatriarch whatever will do so well as she will do in that station; and, indeed, the female reigns have always been the most glorious in Britain. Mrs. Hamilton is well, and salutes you. Mrs. Mure is big and well. This is all I have to say except that I am truly yours.

AL. COCKBURN.

(a).—‘ Few self-drawn parallels have been more utterly fallacious. Whatever common bond of taste or imagination they may have had, this pure-minded and kind-hearted woman had very little indeed, either in heart or disposition, enjoyed by her in common with the object of her enthusiasm; and had the *Confessions* been then published, she must have felt the almost shocking nature of the comparison.’—J. HILL BURTON.

(b).—‘ Mrs. Cockburn’s free and animated remarks,’ says Mr. Hill Burton, ‘ are written in full assurance that neither adulation nor prosperity would diminish the regard of that simple manly

* A piece torn off.

heart for the chosen friends he had left in his native soil.'

(c).—An allusion to the fact that, by returning to his house in Edinburgh, Hume had displaced the Rev. Dr. Blair, who had occupied it in his absence.

(d).—Hume brought Rousseau with him to England in the beginning of 1766—a kindness which the eccentric Frenchman requited with his usual suspicion and ingratitude.

(e).—The sweetheart of her girlhood. See pages 105, 116.

VIII.

TO MISS CUMMING.

1766.

ROUSSEAU has a pen that can wound to the bottom of the heart. His common character is that cursed, suspicious, querulous temper. David Hume was warned of it, but his affection ran away with him, and I am sorry for his disappointment. In his (Rousseau's) long letter he accused David Hume of the meanest things, which he is incapable of, such as opening his (Rousseau's) letters. It's my firm opinion the poor man is mad—suspicion is a never-failing attendant on

that disorder. Great genius with strong feelings is apt to crack the machine, and I sincerely pity him. I would not have David answer him in public, and yet I fear he will be obliged to do it. I am truly glad to get David home again ; he's a very old friend, and I've long had a habit of liking him and being diverted with him.

IX.

TO MR. CHALMERS (*a*).

7th January 1767.

PEACE be with him, whoever he be, that causeth the widow's hand to work with ease, who maketh her paper and wax to abound ! His fame shall be as wide as words of ink can make it : it shall not depend upon words made of air that may be frozen or zephyred away as Boreas or Zephurnia pleases. Lasting as paper, black as ink, immortal as poets can render it, be the fame of the Giver of the Gifts of Kings.

(*a*).—'Bobby' Chalmers, Mrs. Cockburn's 'Brownie,' was a solicitor who lived in Adam's Buildings, a man of simple but of genuine and

upright character. He appears to have had considerable means, and to have settled at Musselburgh, where many letters were addressed to him by Mrs. Cockburn. His daughter—Mrs. Cockburn's 'sweet Anne Page,'—became Mrs. Mark Pringle of Clifton, Haining and Fairnilee.

X.

TO MR. ROBERT CHALMERS.

Faimalee, 1767.

THIS moment I am informed of the heavy stroke you and Mrs. Chalmers have met with. I thank God I can shed tears for the sorrows of others, though I cannot for my own. I should not say so, for to me it is a real grief to lose a youth of such promising hopes, uncommonly blest by nature and by fortune. I have wept for him. Was he too good, do you think, to be left to corrupt in this dissipated world? Is it a favour of Heaven to him, and a chastisement to us? I hope so : I believe so. He is gone uncontaminated to the God who made him. He had beauty, parts, and fortune enough to have made him fearfully corrupted. How happy is it for him that he is called home early, before his

spirit was sullied by the contagion of the world ! I heartily pity his sisters ! Alas ! how can trash compensate for the loss of a friend and brother ? My respects to his grandmother and aunt. I do not wish them not to feel, but I hope Heaven will support them under so heavy a stroke.

XI.

TO DAVID HUME.

[Addressed to David Hume, Esq., Secretary of State's Office, London.]

Ravelston, 1st June 1767.

I SEND you this, sir, to explain the hint in my last. It comes by Mr. Keith, who is son to an intimate friend of mine. He wishes your countenance and advice in a way of life he is about to pursue. He will tell you his intentions, and you will know whether it is in your power to serve him. I have no doubt of your complying if you can when I tell you you cannot oblige me more, nor have an opportunity of serving a more worthy young man. Pray are we not to see you this summer ? Could you not be of the party with

the five Dutchesses that are to illuminate our island? I am not in a talkative mood to-day, which saves you from the trouble of reading four pages.—I am, dear sir, yours,

AL. COKBURNE.

I left the walls of Edinburgh yesterday quite empty. This place belongs to the young gentleman's father—only two miles from town, as wild and romantick as the highlands.

XII.

TO MR. CHALMERS.

Ravelston [1767?]

ALAS, your spouse and me never met. The very day after your Miss Anne did me the pleasure to drink tea with me, Halbert Duff, who wanted to carry me west with him, found out I was in a fever. I had not the sense to find it out for myself, as I had been ill above a month, and much deprest in spirit. I took it to be the state of age approaching, and was setting my mind to receive its cold approaches. However, a fever commenced, with all the applications of bleeding and blistering; and I suppose it was

worse than I apprehended, because Doctor Rutherford came always thrice a day. It confined me three weeks, and left me a very skeleton. I am still weak, and eat far too little, but am come out to fresh air, old friendship, perfect ease, regular hours, and good milk in my friend's house, Ravelston. I came here on the Tuesday, and began to recruit on the road. I exchanged a bow with your spouse, who was in a chaise. . . . I must find fault with all my countrywomen, who pay so bad a compliment to my favourite sex that none of them chooses the sacred hymeneal tie that can live independent of it. It's really very strange. I'm clear for burning Sir Charles Grandison by the hands of the hangman. The girls are all set agog seeking an ideal man, and will have none of God's corrupted creatures. I wonder why they wish for perfection. For my share I would none on't—it would ruin all my virtues and all my love. Where would be the pleasure of mutual forbearance, of mutual forgiveness? Even as a good housewife, I would choose my lord and master should have many faults, because there's so much glory in mending them. One is prouder of darning an old tablecloth than of sewing a new one. . . . I must go

walk. I have disobeyed orders by writing so long a letter. They say I waste myself with writing ; but I deny it, for I think less when I write than any other time.

XIII.

TO MISS CUMMING.

[About 1767.]

I NEVER, I think, passed a busier time than I have done since we parted. Good weather and universal acquaintance is a most fatiguing affair ; but I have little to complain of, since both body and spirit is able for it all. On Saturday we had a most tight hopp at Colonel Harris's, where your friend Mrs. Cockburn danced like a miss. 'It's a wonder to me that woman holds out. She has more levity than any girl of fifteen—would fain be thought young, I suppose, and no doubt setting out for a second venture !' 'You are mistaken, madame, I know that woman perfectly well. It's her humour to dance, and yours to talk. She will do as she pleases, and allow you the same freedom. And for a husband—she has too

slave with an honourable intention of becoming your master? All these and much more, with your dreams of the night and your flights of the day, I desire may be faithfully transmitted. These are the works suited to my taste. But whenever you are idler than a summer fly, draw me a bold stroke for a pair of ruffles, only the edge thereof with much show and little work, and I care not though it be fruits or birds instead of flowers—for why confine to imitate only one of the works?

XIV.

TO MISS CUMMING AND LADY ANNE LINDSAY.

February 1768.

I AM greatly relieved, for I am not so sanguine as other people to imagine a recovery in old age after all symptoms of death, and I was pleased with Mary Baird's idea. I told her there was some hope last week; she thought a little and said, 'Well, I'm sorry for it, for it will be all to do over again—all the grief to them and pain to him, and how long can it last?' I thank you for taking me into the room and letting me see the venerable scene. Your letter

found me in bed this morning, and I shed tears—a dew Heaven has denied me for real heart-aches, but they come from approbation—it was indeed gratitude to Heaven for taking away my patriarch without a pang. I have kissed his cold cheek—I see him. He liked me, and I truly respected and admired him. I am happy at his tranquil death. He was ‘a man that, take him all in all, we shall not see his like again.’ Yet Colin is wonderfully like him. They (Colin and Robert) drank tea with me yesterday. Do ye know they are better companions to me than Sir This or Mr. That? I carried in your letter to Lady Dumfries (*a*); and she shewed me hers from Lady Margaret. Jeanie read out your letter; and, when you imputed the easy passage to temperance Lady Dumfries’ eyes run over, and she found a lump in her throat. How hard it is to be yoked to one whom you hope to part from eternally. She feels it. The news has thinned the playhouse to-night; the Dalziel family were going out and did not. Every proper respect is paid to the remains of our patriarch. Brutified as Dumfries is, there was a ball he and his family were asked to. ‘Na, na,’ says he, ‘Mrs. Janet, we will see what comes of

our uncle Balcarres first. If we do not respect the dead, we 'll never be respected by the living.' Jeanie Duff told me this, and said he ought never to have spoke again. [*The conclusion of this letter is addressed to a daughter of the deceased Earl.*]

My dear Lady Anne, your letter I found to-night when I came from a long tour of sick people. I am a good deal fatigued with seeing much distress, though I was comforted with seeing Mrs. Scott (*b*). She is really recovering and very happy. My next scene was a wife that is sorry she cannot be sorry that her mate is dying. She is low-spirited, but not grieved. Grief is a pleasure for an object of worth, but the pangs the unworthy give to worthy minds is the bitterness of death. Much have you to see, much to observe, for you are born with a mind—which is not so common as we vulgarly imagine. And alas! much have you to feel! Look on it early as a nursery where you are to be whipped into good order and a perfect acquiescence with the Divine Will. The Almighty Maker of souls, who has various methods of restoring them to the divine image—it is impossible His power can fail—impossible for His image to be eternally obliterated—

impossible that sin, misery, and discord can be eternal. Look then on the erring sons of men as on wretched prisoners, bound in fetters for a time; but recollect that they are and must be eternal as well as you, and that in the endless ages of Eternity they will be restored to order. This faith, which is sincerely mine, makes me see things in very different lights from what others do, and perhaps is the key to my whole conduct. Clean and unclean are welcome to me—I know that, with all our thousand errors flesh is heir to, we will one day be all right. Death has set me into the other world so far, I forget this. See that you give your mother some castor in wine, when she goes to bed. It saved my brain once, after long fatigue—half-a-teaspoonful, mixed with her little finger with white wine, will compose her beyond what ye can imagine—see it be done. Yes, I will come over. I am not now the most cheerful companion, but assure your mother I am a friend. She is directly a widow at the same year of her life I was left one.

(a).—Lady Dumfries, half-sister to Lady Balcarres, whose husband's death is the occasion of writing. After the death of her first husband,

the Earl of Dumfries and Stair, she married Alexander, third son of the Earl of Aberdeen. Jeanie Duff, her sister, became wife to Sir Hugh Dalrymple of North Berwick.

(*b*).—Mother of Sir Walter Scott.

XV.

TO LADIES ANNE AND MARGARET LINDSAY.

[Same occasion, 1768].

THIS has been a useful lesson to you, my children. Die you must—live you must, and eternally too, whether you will or not. There are no precepts for life so eligible or so well-bred as those Jesus Christ gives in a very few words. Read what he says—he is the best-natured teacher you can meet with: he is never angry but at hypocrites. Had we as great access to the human heart as he had, would we be as good-natured? Would we bless those who curse us? Yet to be his disciples we must do so. Your letter reached me, Anne, when I was with a friend in the country. It had everything in it to delight me, and I read it with pride, for it had that kindness of heart too, without which all the rest is but whipped cream. The mother of the family I am

now with was my school companion fifty years ago. I recommend it to you to lay in these kind of treasures for old age—they are the coals that, laid up in summer, keep us warm in winter ; no money can purchase them after the chill of life begins to creep on. Let kindness therefore be the moving spring in your souls ; it produces happiness in this world and beatitude in the next. No matter though you are sometimes cheated and deceived—that must happen through life. You will cheat yourself most if you lose that blessed disposition of which you have so truly the seeds. The Scripture calls it charity—I call it kindness ; chuse which name you like best, but keep the thing, my child !

XVI.

TO DAVID HUME.

*[Addressed to David Hume, Esq., Brewers Street,
London.]*

Castlehill, December 16th, [1768].

MOST satisfactory, dear Phil., is your account of all your animal functions. God long preserve thy five wits—for what has a man to do

under the sun but to eat, drink, and be merry? I also perfectly rejoice at the state of your avarice and ambition. I really believe Nature, in forming you, (for ye know God did not make you,) took such just proportions of matter, and such a due mixture of passions and appetites as just served the purpose of one another; and all this you impute to reason, who has nothing to do in the matter. Did either avarice or ambition bear sway, your stomach would not be so good. Who ever heard of avarice being *satisfied* before? It is like the barren field, which sayeth it never hath enough. And for ambition to wait!—satisfied avarice, with ambition a waiter at his back, is a new figure. I wish you would lend this group of patient passions to the present play-wrights, for they are run scarce of characters. There is, however, just *one* fault in your form, which, if God had made you, would not have happened; you want something to preponderate, some moving principle. And now have I found an occupation just suited to me. I durst not try to mend my Maker's works, but surely the works of Nature may be turned as I please. And to show you I was not slow about making you descend from your Parisian, your Engloisian, your Bathate

schemes, I went over that moment to the house you mentioned ; it has a good prospect, and a bad, a very bad, aspect. It has a bank of earth before it and the sun,—no windows to the west,—nothing but the cold north, with distant views of verdure and sunshine, which it can never hope to partake of. In short, I would as soon be the soul of an unburied sinner wandering about the river Styx, as live in these houses. They have one poor parlour, and a tolerable room off a floor. £73! I would not take one of them gratis, unless it was for my son's sake ; it would save him a jointure in a year's time. Now, mind you must not let Allan know who writes you this account ; for I dare say you would not willingly make me an enemy. In reality, they are bad unwholesome houses (*a*). But I have a great mind to determine your motions by fixing you in George Street [*? Square*], where two excellent houses are to be let or sold.

You have no notion of our city now ; it has expanded itself prodigiously ; these houses lie in the eye of the sun, just by the Meadow, of easy access for carriages ; and will have markets, and every thing convenient, even a chapel ! You have many acquaintances in that street,—the Carres ;

Brown, Eliston; Pringle, Crichton; Mrs. Carr, Cavers; Captain Napier and his wife, your cousin, etc. Cousin Baird has advertised all this land to sell; and, as we will probably be to flit, I would think of your little house if I were not determined against the north side of the town, Now I think on 't, I will take Scott of Harden's house for you directly; it has garden, coach-house, etc. etc., and then your *avarice* will speak of itself. I shall also secure you in a wife, without putting you to any trouble about resolving. Make ye friends with Lord Monbodo? no, that's out of my power (*b*): I have not now such influence with him as I have had; but I can teach you a way to bring it about when you come down. Manager's box in the playhouse; Mrs. Ross; Cards; not play at cards? Goodness! how little you know of our world. Dear man, you can be member of the Capilaire, and then have Sunday set apart for that and topeing (*c*), besides parties all the week long. I confess the ladies are still backward in that article, which is owing either to that jade Fortune, or these days' husbands, I can't tell which. But no fear, come along; bring you vices we shall find objects for them. As for the Godly, there is not one here. They are all

happy with a grandson. Carres, elegant, well, and easy. Lord Alemoor in the gout. Jock Swinton (who is proud of your remembrance) is well, sober, and diligent. Adam never writes ; I am angry at him just now ; but I know what he waits for—La. Balcarres and her lovely lasses in town for the winter. The town is too big, and I am the reverse of you ; I am grown too little, and hide myself in my own shell. I am,
yours faithfully, A. COCKBURN.

(a).—The house to which Mrs. Cockburn had such violent objection was in Ramsay Gardens. ‘I had taken,’ wrote Hume in 1769, ‘one of Allan Ramsay’s houses, but gave it up again on the representation of some of my friends in Edinburgh, who said that a house on the north side of a high hill in the 56th degree of latitude could not be healthful. But I now repent it, though I have my old house to retreat to till I get a better.’ There is a friendly familiarity in the mention of ‘Allan,’ which speaks well for the terms on which the son of the poet of *The Gentle Shepherd* stood with both lady and philosopher.

(b).—James Burnett, Lord Monboddo, one of the most eccentric and most learned judges that ever sat upon the Scottish Bench. The very night of his return from college in Holland, half undressed and with his nightcap on his head, he

was carried along with a dense mob and compelled to witness the hanging of Porteous in the Grass-market. It was the Douglas Cause that first brought him into prominence ; and, after serving as Sheriff of Kincardine, he was raised to the bench in 1767—just the year before Hume appears to have asked Mrs. Cockburn to promote their friendship. In his work on the origin of language, Lord Monboddo, anticipating the theory of evolution, maintained that men were derived from monkeys and once had tails—an opinion then hailed with derision. His wife, a Miss Farquharson, related to Marischal Keith, possessed great beauty and accomplishments, which were enhanced in her daughter Elizabeth, in whom they evoked the admiration of Burns (see p. 188). She refused many an eligible offer that she might devote herself to the care and comfort of her father. Very fond of horseback, the judge had a great contempt for carriages ; and often, when leaving Court on a rainy day, he would walk home on foot, hiring a sedan-chair for his wig. Nearly every year he used to ride up and down to London, where he was treated with great distinction, the King, it was said, finding much pleasure in his conversation.

(c).—The Capillaire Club ‘was composed of all those who were inclined to be witty and joyous,’ and in 1774 had nearly 200 ladies and gentlemen of the first distinction at its annual ball, the Duchess of Douglas and Mrs. Scott of Balcomie making a most brilliant appearance.

Mrs. Scott's jewels alone were estimated above £30,000. Mr. Hill Burton's uncharitable surmise that the Capillaire was 'some very wicked club then in existence in Edinburgh' is pleasantly refuted by its gift, that same year, of twenty guineas to the Charity Workhouse.

(d).—Alexander, Earl of Balcarres, had just succeeded to the title on the death of his father, 20th February 1768. Young Culloden was son of Lord President Forbes. Young Newton-Don was probably Alexander, who succeeded as fifth Baronet in 1773, and whose two young daughters were drowned in the Eden in 1795. Young Crichton was Mark, grandson of the duellist Mark Pringle of Haining, who bought Crichton in Midlothian after his return from a long and adventurous exile. Young Mark never succeeded to Crichton, his father, John Pringle, having to sell it on becoming bankrupt.

XVII.

TO MR. CHALMERS.

1770.

HEAVEN'S best guardians attend my dear Brownny. I am not very well, not very ill. If you can cure two-score and seventeen you may do so, but I am indifferent; I sincerely

rejoice that the wife of my Browny's bosom is preserved to him, and to me, and to all who love and value—I won't say what. You ask my commands. I order you to bid Peggy Crawford court Adam Cockburn. I am far from certain that she would succeed, but it will be very honourable, and he will refuse her genteelly, or take her kindly, and truly *sans* jointures and all the et-ceteras of the present times. If you find time, a letter will be a regale to—Your friend,

A. C.

XVIII.

TO MISS CUMMING.

[Before 1771.]

I HAD just now a visit from the Soph (*a*), whose absence I see will give you no pain. How comes it that so few tempers can mix in society—in any intimate society? Alas, how will we make a part in that grand chorus of Eternal Harmony if we carry with us so many discordant strings? But may we hope that death will set us free from a thousand prejudices and passions that flesh is heir to? Much reason have

I to hope what it is so much my interest to believe; and yet I thank God, my passions are not of the discordant kind. Though I suffer more by affection than those who feel only for themselves, I am content to take the lot God sends us as patiently as I can : yet there is a Magosis (?) in my fate somewhat uncommon—I have the fate of losing friends in such various ways that it is wonderful. If God intends my heart to be entirely devoted to Him, oh may He soon make it so! But perhaps the divorce from what it loves best is the prelude?

(a).—Miss Sophia Johnstone, daughter of the Laird of Hilton, who persuaded his wife to let the girl grow up ‘a child of nature,’ absolutely without education, which, he said, was all nonsense. After being called in jest Hilton’s ‘natural’ daughter, in a few years she passed *bonâ fide* for his illegitimate child. ‘I scarce think,’ says Lady Anne Lindsay, ‘that any system of education could have made this woman one of the fair sex. Nature seemed to have entered into the jest, and hesitated to the last whether to make her a boy or a girl. Her taste led her to hunt with her brothers, to wrestle with the stable-boys, and to saw wood with the carpenter. She worked well in iron, could shoe a horse quicker than the smith, made excellent trunks, played well on the fiddle,

sang a man's song in a bass voice, and was by many people suspected of being one. She learnt to write of the butler, at her own request, and had a taste for reading which she greatly improved. She came to spend a few months with my mother soon after her marriage ; and at the time I am speaking of had been with her thirteen years, making Balcarres her headquarters.' Between Soph and Miss Cumming there was unquenchable dislike. Sir Walter Scott, writing in 1823 to Lady Anne, says : ' Well do I remember Soph's jockey coat, masculine stride, strong voice, and, occasionally, round oath. I remember also many of her songs, for example—

" Eh ! quo' the tod, it's a braw licht nicht,
The wind's i' the west and the mune shines bricht," etc.

Moreover, did I not see her kick my poor sister's shins under the card-table at Mrs. Cockburn's for moving her feet in some way inconvenient to the said Soph, who added at the same time to her pedestrian correction this exclamation (how acceptable to a miss in her teens your ladyship may believe), " What is the lassie wabster, wabster, wabstering that gate for ? " In short, I saw this extraordinary original both at home and at Mrs. Cockburn's, and am like to laugh even now whenever I think of her.' Poor Soph had a miserable ending. A sceptic, without hope, ' but not without terror,' she lived to extreme old age, and latterly in great misery through penuriousness, her first

salutation to visitors being always, 'What hae ye brocht, what hae ye brocht?'—stretching out her skinny arm to receive the offering.

XIX.

TO MISS CUMMING.

[Before 1771.]

OF all the sounds I ever heard (and my soul has soared to heaven before now), of all the sounds I ever heard, Colonel Reed's flute—well, it is amazing the powers of it. It thrills to your very heart. He plays in any taste you please and composes what he plays. You know my taste is the *penseroso*, and so it is his. He played me five acts of a tragedy that went to my heart, and I spoke in to myself all the words of it. I would not let him speak the epilogue. You must hear him, Sylph. O how I regretted your absence to-night, but here is a letter will bring harmony enough to you. My niece Clerk (*d* 2, p. 27) was so good as entertain me with Colonel Reed to-night (*a*). He is a gentle, melancholy, tall, well-bred, lean man; and, for his flute, it speaks all languages. But those sounds that come from the heart to the heart—I never could have conceived it.

It had a dying fall—I was afraid I could not bear it when I heard it perfectly. I can think of nothing but that flute, so good-night, good Sylph.

(a). — Afterwards General Reid, who left £50,000 to found a Chair of Music in Edinburgh University.

XX.

TO MISS CUMMING.

[Before 1771.]

ON Wednesday I gave a ball. How do ye think I contrived to stretch out this house to hold twenty-two people, and had nine couple always dancing? Yet this is true; it is also true that we had a table covered with divers eatables all the time, and that everybody eat when they were hungry and drank when they were dry, but nobody ever sat down. I think my house, like my purse, is just the widow's cruse. I must tell you my party of dancers. Captain Bob Dalrymple was king of the ball, as it was his bespeaking. Tell Lady Balcarres that. As a nephew she will take delight in him: he is my first favourite. Well, for men, there was Bob and

Hew, young men both ; Peter Inglis ; a Mr. Bruce, a lawyer ; then Jock Swinton and Jock Turnbull. Then, for women, there were Tibbie Hall, my two nieces (Miss Rutherfurds—Nannie and Peggie), Agnes Keith, Christy Pringle, Babie Carnegie, Christy Anderson, Jeanie Rutherford. Mrs. Mure and Violy Pringle (*b*, p. 104) came and danced a reel and went off. Now for our dance. Our fiddler sat where the cupboard is, and they danced in both rooms ; the table was stuffed into the window and we had plenty of room. It made the bairns all vastly happy. Next day I went to the Assembly with all these misses. Never was so handsome an Assembly. There were seven sets—one all quality ladies and all handsome ; one called the maiden set, for they admitted no married women ; one called the heartsome set, which was led off by Lady Christian Erskine, in which danced Mrs. Horn, Suff Johnston, Anne Keith. Bess St. Clair and Lady Dunmore humbly begged to be admitted to stand at the foot, which was granted. Suff was my bed-fellow all night, and is just gone.

XXI.

TO REV. MR. DOUGLAS (*a*).

[*Address.—For Mr. Douglas, Minister of the Gospel at Galashiels, to the Care of Lady Fairnilee, with a parcel.*]

Crichton Street [Edinburgh], 22nd March 1773.

SIR,—I have at last made good my promise of sending you Mr. Davison's letters. They will show you, whatever I am now, I was then honour'd with the friendship of a real saint, for such he was, as much as mortal infirmitys could permit (*b*). There is 17 letters which you may give in charge to Lady Fairnilee, when you are done with them. I'm sure you people in the country will be enjoying a perfect new pleasure, for I believe none living ever saw such a March befor. You will not even envy me the pleasure I lately had of supping in company with Mrs. Yates, who in her own proper character is a sensible, lively, well-bred woman (*c*). The good weather and sermon week has thin'd the town pretty much, but I feel no blanks in my

village yet. Wishing you everything that's
really good for you, I am, sir, your most
humble servant, AL. COKBURNE.

Note on margin of outer leaf.—There's to be
a Tragedy exhibited in the Grass Market to-
morrow for the benefit of the storemasters (*d*).

(*a*).—The Reverend Robert Douglas, minister
of Galashiels from 1770 to 1820, was born in
1746 at Kenmore, of which parish his father was
minister before his translation to Jedburgh. Dr.
Somerville, in his *Life and Times*, records that
Mr. Douglas was considered to owe his presenta-
tion to Jedburgh to his successful exertions in
preventing Kenmore parishioners from joining
the Pretender in 1745, and tells a story much
to his honour. He had been introduced to the
Duke of Cumberland as a man who had done the
state some service, and the Duke promised to
take the first opportunity of rewarding him. A
short time afterwards, hearing that two or three
men of his parish had been seized with arms in
their hands, and were about to be executed,
Mr. Douglas rode more than 20 miles to the
Duke's headquarters to remind him of his
promise, and offering to abandon any personal
claim on his favour if the men's lives were
spared. After an obstinate struggle, he succeeded
in his object, and was not himself a loser by his

generosity. The Jedburgh congregation, strongly prejudiced in favour of the youngest son of Boston of Ettrick, author of the *Fourfold State*, and already successful in rejecting one presentee of Lord Lothian, made strenuous efforts to prevent the settlement of Mr. Douglas, urging he was disqualified by an unrepealed Act of Assembly expressly prohibiting the removal to the Lowlands of any settled minister 'having Irish'—that is, able to speak Gaelic! All objections, however, were repelled by the Assembly, and Mr. Douglas, who had been nominated by the Earl of Breadalbane with consent of the Marquis of Lothian, was ordained in 1758. This gave rise to a large secession, called by the name of Relief, under Mr. Boston. The magistrates shamefully prostituted their authority to render Mr. Douglas's incumbency unpleasant, but his uncommon prudence and agreeable manners had a visible effect in blunting the edge of opposition, and restoring the good temper of the parish. His son, Robert Douglas, minister of Galashiels, Mrs. Cockburn's constant correspondent from 1773 until her death in 1794, married Robina, daughter of Edward Lothian, jeweller, Edinburgh, and had issue—George, merchant in Glasgow; Helen, wife of Rev. John Thomson of Maxton; Arabella, who died in Edinburgh in 1876; and Beatrice; besides others who died in infancy. To Mr. R. D. Thomson of Edinburgh and Mr. J. S. Thomson of Carlisle (Dr. Douglas's grandson and great-grandson) the public are indebted

for the preservation of Mrs. Cockburn's letters, and for liberty to print them in these pages. Dr. Douglas, who sold the first acres of Abbotsford to Sir Walter Scott, and enjoyed the intimate friendship of the author of *Waverley*, was the 'reverend minister' to whom Scott addressed 'Paul's Letter' on religion in France. Belonging to the Broad or Moderate section of the Church, devoid of bigotry, and taking a large view of his duty, he looked upon all his parishioners, church-folk or dissenters, as having claims upon him both spiritual and temporal. When the nascent woollen trade of the town was in great difficulties, he freely advanced assistance from his private means—an evidence of generosity and public spirit which was deeply appreciated. The year before his death Dr. Douglas was presented by the now prosperous manufacturers with a silver cup (still in Mr. Thomson's possession) on which was engraved a poetic dedication by that Galashiels Laureate who, to Sir Walter's inarticulate delight, used to refer to himself and the Last Minstrel as 'we poets':—

Hail, rev'rend Doctor. Dearer still
Now when thy light is all down hill !
There was a time, and not far gone,
When you stood forth, and stood alone ;
When our frail bark was tempest-tost,
And neared the shallow, rocky coast,
Thou cheer'd the crew ! A fav'ring gale
Auspicious fills the swelling sail ;

LETTERS

TO THE DEAR, IS AGAIN TO SEA,
TO THE DEAR, TRIUMPHANTLY!
TO THE DEAR, OF THY DAYS,
TO THE DEAR, AND PRAISE,
TO THE DEAR, LATTER END!
TO THE DEAR, AND OUR FRIEND!

TO THE DEAR, OATHS IN 1783, MR.
TO THE DEAR, ACCOUNT OF GALASHIELS
TO THE DEAR, 1798 A *Survey of the*
TO THE DEAR, *Life and Selkirkshire*, FOR
TO THE DEAR, UNLIFIED. HE IS ALSO
TO THE DEAR, FROM A MEMOIR OF JOHN
TO THE DEAR, FOR AN EDITION
TO THE DEAR, 1812. FROM THE
TO THE DEAR, RECEIVED THE DEGREE

TO THE DEAR, WILSON, THOUGH LACK-
TO THE DEAR, AND BODY OF HIS
TO THE DEAR, REMARKABLE MAN
TO THE DEAR, REMAINED MINISTER
TO THE DEAR, SEVEN YEARS LATER,
TO THE DEAR, HE MARRIED
TO THE DEAR, ONE DAUGHTER
TO THE DEAR, HIS WIFE IN 1806.
TO THE DEAR, OF 1812; BUT
TO THE DEAR, AFTER THE
TO THE DEAR, OVER
TO THE DEAR, PER
TO THE DEAR, HAD
TO THE DEAR, THE APOSTOLIC
TO THE DEAR, 1812.



REV. DR. DOUGLAS

After Sir Henry Raeburn, R.A.

The vessel stands again to sea,
 And rides the waves triumphantly!
 So, in the Autumn of thy days,
 Accept our gratitude and praise,
 To cheer thee in thy latter end!
 Our Guide, our Pastor, and our Friend!

Besides a pamphlet on Oaths in 1783, Mr. Douglas wrote a statistical account of Galashiels Parish in 1790, and in 1798 *A Survey of the Agriculture of Roxburghshire and Selkirkshire*, for which he was admirably qualified. He is also credited with having written a memoir of John Logan, the Scots minister-poet, for an edition of his poems published in 1812. From the University of Aberdeen he received the degree of D.D. in 1797.

(b).—The Rev. Henry Davidson, though lacking the virile strength in mind and body of his successor, Dr. Douglas, was a remarkable man enough. Born in 1687, he was ordained minister of Galashiels in 1714. Thirteen years later, much against the wishes of her family, he married Katherine, the amiable and accomplished daughter of Sir James Scott of Gala by his wife Euphame, daughter of Sir William Douglas of Cavers; but she died in childbirth a twelvemonth after the wedding. It was a stroke he never got over. He secluded himself from society, never permitting himself to allude to what had happened. He was the last survivor of 'the Twelve Apostles' who protested against the General Assembly's con-



demnation of the *Marrow of Modern Divinity*; but after the death of his friend Boston of Ettrick, he cooled in his devotion to government by presbytery, and became an 'Independent' in everything short of his retention of the benefice. About 1735 he actually discontinued administering the Sacrament, and used to go down to Maxton on Sunday evenings to join in the Communion of a small body of seceding Congregationalists! Although he paid no attention to Church Courts of any kind, his co-presbyters not only refrained from prosecuting, but connived with his people, who would not hear of him giving up his charge when he expressed his willingness to do so. A collection of his *Letters to Christian Friends* was published in 1811, prefaced by a memoir which must have been written by Dr. Douglas, who takes care to dissociate himself from approval of every expression and sentiment in the letters. Truth to say, they are almost hysterically evangelical, and carry self-depreciation and spiritual humiliation to a point hardly compatible with robust intelligence. He was a great reader of books of all kinds, and 'at one time was so fond of reading, he rose at three in the morning' (see page 173, and *Selkirkshire*, i. 490).

(c).—Mrs. Yates was born in London of Scots parents, her father being a well-to-do sea-captain, who gave her an excellent education. Of surpassing beauty, tall and commanding in figure, with a full, clear, and mellifluous voice, together

with a well-cultivated taste and judgment, Mrs. Yates had few superiors on the stage—not excepting even Mrs. Siddons herself. For her performances in Edinburgh she was in 1785 paid one hundred guineas a night, although then 57 years of age. ‘Though accustomed to the highest circles, possessed of a fortune realised by her own talents, and standing high in the applause of the world, she was remarkable for simplicity and the absence of everything like professional affectation’ (Kay’s *Portraits*, ii. 206).

(*d*).—Storemaster = tenant of a sheep-farm. Two men were hanged for sheep-stealing in the Grassmarket on 24th March 1773.

XXII.

TO REV. MR. DOUGLAS.

Crichton Street, 13th March 1774.

THANK you, sir, for your entertaining account of the cruel hunt. I am heartily glad the noble animal had his revenge on one of the two-footed brutes who used him ill. It was fine his dyeing and nicking them out of their intended barbarity (*a*). Tell Lady Fairnilee I’m surprised at her want of *politesse* to our cousin Duke (*b*)—she ought to have sent her fox in a

bag for his amusement. Indeed, if I had been in spirits at the time, I had determined to send her a card from his Grace, begging the favour, but Mrs. Home's death put all sports out of my head. I enclose you a simple epitaph with no merit but truth in it. I have not been in the playhouse, nor in any house but my own and the house of prayer, this winter ; but heard everybody delighted with Foot's *Nabob* (c). This night they play *She Stoops to Conquer*. I have seen a very good new comedy lately—*The School for Wives* ; but just now it's unfashionable to read anything but Lord Kaims (d). I hope when you had the power of making the Duke hear, that you pour'd in salutary words. He has to all accounts very good dispositions, generous humane, with perfect good manners, but an unlucky reserve of temper, and a bashfulness that hurts him. This is the character I get from all who know him. He wants but a good wife to compleat him. I am glad to hear Gala has got a son ; I heartily wish them joy (e).

And maidens may
 Rew sore the day,
 Plums not to get—
 E'en tho' so fit.

(If ever you saw greater
 nonsense, you have been
 very lucky.)

Thank ye for rebuses—had not Miss Mary Pringle explained, my numscul had puzzled to no purpose. Keep these letters till I see you at Tweedside, and believe me, sir, your friend and servant,

AL. COCKBURNE.

(a).—A stag, attracted by oat sheaves set out for sheep during an exceptionally severe winter, having been caught at Middlestead, near Selkirk, it was resolved by the gentlemen of the county to revive in Ettrick Forest the ancient glories of the chase. While penned in a barn, it sprang at a man who was cruelly ill-using it, goring him with its antlers so that he died in a few days. With its feet tied, the stag was carried ignominiously in a cart to Midlem, where the Laird of Gala was waiting with his hounds. It made a splendid run, but was caught up near Ettrick Bridge, so lame that it could not be kept for another hunt, as the sportsmen had intended.

(b).—Probably John, 3rd Duke of Roxburgh (the book collector), who died 1804, aged 64, and unmarried. Mrs. Cockburn's mother was a Kerr.

(c).—On this occasion Foote came from Dublin to perform seven nights, for which he received £250. Once when driven back by a snowstorm from Erickstane to Moffat, Foote was amazed to find on the panel of his carriage a scrap of poetry

in which the spirit of the North-wind was represented as exclaiming—

‘Let not *one foot*, tis my behest, profane
The sacred snows which lie on Erickstane.’

With the author of the *jeu d’esprit*, Mr. M‘Culloch of Ardwell, Foote was soon on genial terms, and never afterwards visited Scotland without spending an evening or two with him and his friends, at Springfield on Leith Walk.

(*d*).—Henry Home took the title of his paternal estate of Kames on being elevated to the Bench. Scholar, litterateur, philosopher, judge—and in all these capacities entitled to respect—Lord Kames had a vein of what was then considered rough eccentricity, but would now be called a very different name. Nothing is more amazing than the number of eminent Senators of the Scots Court of Justice at that time who, with much mental culture and refinement, showed the utmost coarseness in speech and behaviour. Amongst his lordship’s singularities, which were not a few, was his constant use of a certain word, which he used freely even on the bench. James Boswell pillories it in his *Court of Session Garland*—

Alemoor the judgment as illegal blames,
‘’Tis equity, you b——h,’ replies Lord Kames.

A week or so before his death, after bidding a solemn adieu to all his fellow-judges, he turned round at the door, took a last look at his sorrowing

brethren, and exclaimed, 'Fare ye a' weel, ye b——s.' Yet nothing could be more touching or dignified than his last words to an old friend : 'I feel that I am dying. I leave this world in peace and good-will to all mankind. You know the dread I had of outliving my faculties ; of that I trust there is now no probability, my body decays so fast.' He died in 1782, in his 87th year ; but of all his numerous works, so much run after in Mrs. Cockburn's time, not one is now read save by an occasional student of the age in which he lived. It was probably his *Sketches of the History of Man*, published in 1774, that was setting Edinburgh agog when Mrs. Cockburn wrote.

(e).—John Scott of Gala, who married Anne, only daughter of Colonel M'Dougall of Makerston. It was their third son, John, whose birth is here noted. Mrs. Cockburn's doggerel seems to cover some obscure allusion to the *Sour Plums o' Galashiels*.

XXIII.

TO REV. MR. DOUGLAS.

Sunday night, 6 o'clock, 7th day of the year [1775].

THERE certainly can be no sin in writing to a divine on that day appointed for men to rest from labour and to acknowledge their Maker. . . . As I am a sort of universal Christian, not violently wedded to any sect whatever, I am

not much against Confession, though I despise a mortal's absolution. . . . Let us drop this to trifle a little. Your forrest pack is well described. I do not like your Deer so well—any wit upon infirmity and disease I disapprove of. The Highlander is good. Is it decent to make our member a horn planter? our judge a drammer? Neither is true. It is me, I suppose, whom Cupid makes follow the judge—poor fellow, he has no connection with our affairs. By the by, it is always alleged that women and clergymen are aptest to abuse one another. How should that happen, think ye?—with the weak pious sex, as David Hume calls *us*, or with you teachers of brotherly love? . . . I am to have with me to-night Lady Don, her son and daughter, her brother Charles and his wife, with Miss Murray; and my addition to their party is my niece Anne, nephew Mark, and Captain Pringle—a most happy group of lovers. For all of them are lovers, for which cause I love them all. It is perfectly delightful to see Charles Murray and his wee sweet wife. He loves her with that sacred sweet affection that may be seen by men and angels; and she looks to him as wishing still to please him more, or guess which way to do it. Lady Don's delight in them and

in her own children warms every heart; and good Peggy Murray, mother to a large family (including her own mother), has the cheerfulness of a life well spent in every look. You know the merits of our own boy and girl, so I need not say I have the best of company, much better'd by Captain Pringle's humour, who has a great deal. I send you a sheet wrote by a brother clergyman, with a view of Captain Pringle's house drawn upon it, and his machine for travelling on ice. . . . Monday, 6 at night. Our company last night pleasant as I hoped. You will not think this morning's visitors inferior when I tell you I had Mr. Brown, minister, Miss Balderston, Mrs. David Dalrymple, and Miss Chisholm. . . . I expect Pringle of Crichton and his family—tomorrow makes his son major. I go to solemnize the festival. Years slip on. I cried for joy when his mother was born! I never cried for her death! I see your Sir Robert Fletcher is married. So is Willie Hope (thank God), and my nephew Charles Inglis was his best man. . . . I wonder whether I will send you a lobster or a lady's pocket-book for your New Year gift? . . . Cherish your mother, love your sister, and your friend,

AL. COKBURNE.

XXIV.

TO REV. MR. DOUGLAS.

7th February 1775.

TO be sure, Love, which means the same thing with charity, covereth a multitude of faults. It's likely enough I thought your last a very pretty letter on account of its being illuminated by that brightness. This vile storm has prevented Laird and Lady from making out their jaunt, which I regret much, as we have a very busy town at present. Dancing-assembly, playhouse, Concert, and Kirk—I have not seen Edinburgh so gay these 20 years. It's very certain Major Fletcher is married to a Miss Hunter. He was at his father's house at that time, but whether he is there or gone to London now I know not. For your other question I know Miss Rattray a little, a fine girl she is. She is an intimate friend of Jeanie Rutherford's, the Doctor's daughter (*a*). I knew her also with her cousin Mrs. Horn, where she stayed very often. She is not handsome ; but a modest, genteel girl. I think I'm entitled to know why you wish to be introduced

to her ; and if your reasons are satisfactory it may be brought about by Jeany Ruth[erfurd].

(a).—Within a year Miss Jeany Rutherford, aunt of Sir Walter Scott, was married to Colonel Wm. Russell of Ashiestiel.

XXV.

TO REV. MR. DOUGLAS.

29 Mch., [about 1775].

THANK you, dear sir, for your amendments of me—it is your office to mend us ; and, so far from being averse to being mended, I really am willing, and that, they say, is a great point ! I am very certain that no woman ought to write anything but from the heart to the heart ; never for the public eye without male correction. And I am very proud to see my thoughts ranged into proper order. . . . I could never show them, they were so naked. You must know, my feelings and ideas are so strong and so swift they run away upon paper without once asking me leave. I never in my life thought a moment on what I was to write ; and I never read over

what I write. . . . I have often been vexed that the sentiments of the mind and feelings of the heart are obliged to wear the heavy garb of syllabs, monosyllabs, verbs, nouns, and trash that torment youth to learn, and which I am certain is of no use among our elder brothers of the Creation, the Angels. I don't know how they discourse; but sure I am it is not in many words, which is a weariness to the spirit. You will see I am confin'd to females much at present. By the by, I've just looked at your criticism of something you call inaccurate. It is my placing mind before bone. Now certainly unless our facultys ride as our parliaments used to do—the youngest foremost—I gave the preference to that I esteemed most. It is, however, a gross error now I think on't, for we certainly have bone before we have mind: and you have placed them right. Besides, it sounds better, and I like sound! There is a spring weather might inspire any mortal whose mind was not overcast! But it's hard. The gloom thickens as we grow less able to bear its baleful influence. Age has only one hope and many fears. Adieu, dear sir, you shall be my old wife when I write.

XXVI.

TO REV. MR. DOUGLAS.

28th January 1776.

SUNDAY morning, 6 o'clock—14 days and 3 hours since the death of Lord Alemoor (*a*).

I thank you, dear sir, for your consolatory paper. It is well written: if it were worse, or even indifferent, still should I be grateful for your friendly attention. I sent it to Miss Pringle (*b*), and will surely send it with this to Fairnilee. I am, sir, a veteran in sorrow. No human heart was ever more fortunate than mine in its warmest connexions. The accidental friends of my youth (which can have no judgement for a proper election) have been what my most mature judgement would have glory'd in acquiring, had the acquisition been to make. When you are told I survived my lover, my Husband and guide of my youth, and after him the brother of my heart, nearest in age to myself, you will think it a wonder I need consolation! My heart should be petrify'd, or purify'd beyond the feelings of griefe or any other passion! But I'm not so con-

stituted. God did not make me either a saint or a stone. In losing Lord Alenmore I have lost the friend and early companion of both those friends, and my greatest support under these losses. His superior understanding knew how to overcome as well as his tenderness knew how to soothe the passions. He wished me to rely on his friendship, and I did so. I have no extravagant passions of grief to conquer. I saw and embraced his cold clay with the same feeling that I kneel before my God. I neither need reason nor religion to support this loss. Both of them teach me what I have lost. The more I am mistress of my reason the more I feel my want. There lies by me a book which he commissioned partly at my desire, and some transcripts of it in the reviews pleased him. It was the last book was read to him, for that was the constant amusement in the gout-bed. Half the first volume we heard read and observed upon. I have read the second. It is my only amusement, but when I come to anything pleases me, how much do I feel ! I remember every observation, not now, but 20 years back, for much his sisters and I had of that amusement with him. There was at Haining an old fir tree I had known for 40 years ; it made

the house smoak ; it was cut down ; I cry'd for it. One hates to loss an object they are accustomed to, even the old and useless. What is it then to loss a 40 years' friend with all his great facultys fresh and entire, one on whose wisdom and counsel you could depend ! Under the shadow of his wing you sat safe and sheltered from the storm ; and it appears to me as if light, heat, and air were taken from me. Indeed, his influence was great and beneficent. It's amazing to see the combinations he made. This is a very general observation. But I lose my own sorrows in that of his sisters. Next year is my grand climaterick, so it's probable the separation will not be long. He has left a brother worthy of being *his* brother (*c*). In every word and action he is what hearts could wish but few could hope. A good symptom that an idea of virtue and worth still remains in this dissolute, licentious age (when hardly any one that dyes escapes being hawk'd through the streets in ridiculous Elegy) is when the Funeral went up, the whole Canongate was lined with people in the attitude of Sorrow, and not a word, but deepest silence. You are too young, sir, yet to know what it is to part with the companions of your youth and the friends of

your age. We must submit to it as we must to death, however abhorrent to our nature. And when we know that '*must*' is imposed upon us by the God who made and therefore loves us, we submit the better. Adieu! May you be as happy in your friends through life as I have been, whatever the parting cost you! I would rather be the friend of the deceased Lord Alemoor as Empress of Russia.

(a).—Andrew Pringle, Lord Alemoor, was the eldest son of John Pringle, Lord Haining, and a nephew of Mark, who killed Scott of Raeburn in 1707. After having filled the offices of Sheriff of Selkirk and Solicitor-General, he became a Lord of Session, taking for his title that part of the paternal estate which was in ancient times held by the Achilmeres of that ilk for a broad arrow head at the feast of the Elevation of the Holy Cross in the royal hunts at Ettrick Forest. 'Lord Alemoor' had been an alternative title of the Earl of Tarras, the object of whose marriage to the heiress of Buccleuch, while they were yet boy and girl, was foiled by the lady's early death. (See *History of Selkirkshire*, i. 427, ii. 309.) 'His abilities as a lawyer, and his integrity as a judge, have long been admired. His decisions were the result of deliberate consideration, founded on law, tempered with equity; and his opinions were delivered in such an easy flow of eloquence, and

with such dignity of expression as captivated every hearer and commanded attention' (*Senators of College of Justice*, 523).

(b).—Probably Lord Alemoor's sister, Violet Pringle, who died on the 21st April 1821, aged ninety-six—a lady of marked individuality of character, well brought out in her portrait by Raeburn, here reproduced.

(c).—John Pringle, then M.P. for Selkirkshire, a bachelor like his brother, Lord Alemoor.

XXVII.

TO MR. CHALMERS.

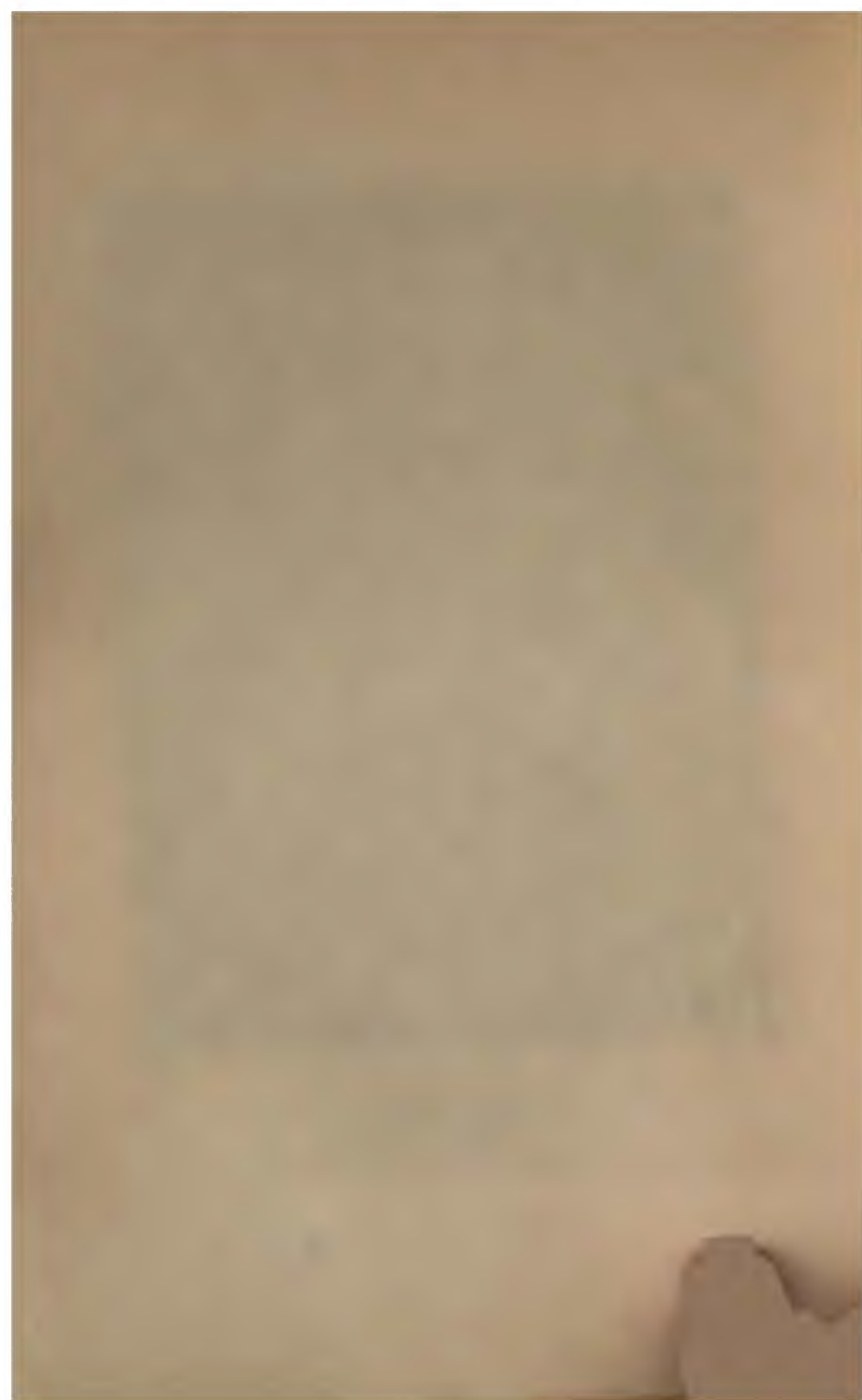
[1776.]

AS I had a warning bell in the shape, or rather sound, of a cough lately, a day in bed put me in remembrance of all I ought to do beneath the sun before I went above it. Amongst the rest I remembered my promise to you, and in doing so remembered with some satisfaction that I never broke a promise in all my long life. No doubt you would think yourself greatly obliged to me if in my last will I bequeathed you some hundreds of the King's image in gold or paper—how much more are you obliged to me for sending you the soul of a man (a), superior to all



VIDLET PRINGLE

for the Henry Thoreau



kings for real worth and native humour ! If I were not certain that you will truly value the gift, you should not have it. No, indeed, for I much value them ; and so you may see by the way I dispose of them. While my friends flourished around me, I was a conceited creature. I set a value on myself because they did, and I thought them perfect judges. Now I find it was mere partiality. My value is sunk as they disappeared. John Aikman's affection, tenderness, and sympathy for me surpassed the love of women ! The pleasing big tear to his memory only allows me to bid you adieu. Continue to be as benevolent as he was. Adieu !

(a).—Her early love, who died just after she was married, but before she was nineteen, and whose memory and letters she appears to have guarded through all the years of her happy married life. That she made no secret of her early attachment is evident from her pathetic reference in a letter to David Hume (page 55). 'Bring Rousseau here. O bring him with you ! I am sure he is like my John Aikman.'

XXVIII.

TO REV. MR. DOUGLAS.

[c. 1776-77.]

MY good father confessor, you almost reconcile me to a part of my creed in which I have ever been very defective. I believe some Hell must be ; yet creatures who come here without their own consent, and whose existence in iniquity cannot last above 70 years, the first and last ten being an O—that even Banker Fordyce (*a*) should be through all eternity a miserable villain is against my ideas of Almighty power and Almighty justice and goodness. . . . Here is the very finest spring day ever I saw. I could enjoy it in the country ; but here when I go out I am in the midst of my creditors. I owe visits to everybody, and cannot think of paying, I am such a bankrupt. I hate visiting, unless the sick or sorry, or to dine and sup with the hospitable and merry. . . . The English patriots are afraid of putting the sword into the hands of the Scots. They endeavour to blast our loyal laurels and call our zeal for government unconstitutional. Who would be a British King? His firm friends are traitors, his rebellious subjects patriots and supporters of Liberty. Great drumming and

piping here—but men very scarce. If you had seen the beautiful eyes and red lips of her who read your letter last night with approbation, you would have been undone. Good-night.

(a).—One of an Aberdeen family of 21 children, Alexander Fordyce attained unenviable celebrity as the cause of one of the most disastrous financial collapses ever experienced in Great Britain, involving not only himself but many others in irretrievable ruin. He took advantage of his high reputation to draw not only the public but his relatives into trusting him, with the result that many families were plunged into poverty, one brother driven to death, and another to insanity. It was, however, the hapless fate that overtook his wife, Lady Margaret Lindsay of Balcarres, which most aroused the anger of her old friend Mrs. Cockburn. ‘Beauty and grace formed her figure,’ says her sister Lady Anne. ‘Her conversation was as gay as enlightened, and had so much brilliancy of wit that nothing could have saved her from envy but the softness of her manner, which so veiled its point that the listener went away charmed with a beautiful woman without having found out that her capacity was even greater than her beauty. Her eyes were dark blue and full of animation when she smiled; but it was the eyelids which gave them that singular expression of beatitude which involuntarily suggested the word angel. Her hair was auburn, inclining to red, her nose Greek approaching to

aquiline, her mouth surrounded with smiles which showed a set of teeth pure and fine. Her form and stature had the fulness of youth's first bloom, while her skin and complexion had all its lustre and delicacy; but the turn of her face and throat—it was Grecian beauty's own self! Never have I heard any voice in singing so melodious; it had perfect affinity with her appearance, and possessed a natural *affettuoso* which surprised tears from the listener—he knew not why. Languages were easy to her, and she could argue with a discrimination and justice rarely to be met. Her memory retained everything. With these varied accomplishments, let me not omit her perfect benevolence, her tenderness for the suffering of others, her patience with their infirmities, her purity of principle, her natural piety—deep and calm.' That this description was not biassed by a sister's partiality the recorded admiration of her contemporaries is abundant proof. Her youthful beauty it was that inspired Sheridan's oft-quoted lines :—

' Marked you her eye of heavenly blue ?
Marked you her cheek of rosy hue ?
That eye in liquid circles roving,
That cheek abashed at man's approving :
The one Love's arrows darting round,
The other blushing at the wound !'

While yet but seventeen this beautiful and sensitive girl was married to 'banker Fordyce.' In two years the long-gathering storm had burst, and Lady Margaret found herself the ruined wife of a ruined and disgraced man. Yet there are few things in the literature of misfortune more

pathetic than the letter she wrote on hearing of the catastrophe. 'The dread tongue of malice and the triumph of those who are not our friends, I own, is a hard thing to bear; but, while you know, and I am convinced of, the rectitude of your intentions, the lenient hand of Time, and, may I add, the soothing attentions of a wife, will get the better of all these misfortunes, and we shall yet be happy. I have sometimes told you I was a philosopher and could be an economist. I come now to the test, and I am too proud to be caught shrinking back like a coward. . . . Yet we have all a vulnerable part, my dear husband—mine is in the thought of your unhappiness. Let me, if possible, see you that I may pour the balm of consolation into your wounded mind, and I shall then hope the time may not be far off when I may sign myself your happy as well as affectionate wife.' Fordyce seems to have died two or three years after his bankruptcy. 'Her later years, long after Mr. Fordyce's death, were troubled by the attachment of a man who sacrificed her life and happiness to his selfishness, and whose conduct, says Lady Anne, "while it inspired her with the disdain of him that he merited, also affected the sweetness and peaceableness of her gentle nature. With grief I saw that a deep resentment corroded her heart. At length, at the earnest instance of my affection and on calmer views of things, I prevailed on her upon a solemn occasion of religious duty to abjure for ever a sentiment which was so contrary to the spirit of Christian forgiveness of injuries. She

did so when taking the sacrament in Dublin, and peace was restored to her mind. Happy after the chagrins suffered by her heart to fix her thoughts on a better world, and after some painful years of regret spent in the passage from youth to age, from beauty in all its radiance to decay, the heart and hand of a person of her own time of life being offered to her—one who as he then acknowledged had been attached to her almost from infancy—it was to the surprise of her acquaintance, but not of the friends who knew the nature of her mind, that she accepted of him, and in the society of his young family by a former wife, who were devoted to her, she found that comfort in her advanced life which she braved the smiles of the world to fold to her heart. During two years Margaret enjoyed contentment in its fullest extent, and seemed happier than I had ever known her."—*Lives of the Lindsays*, vol. ii. p. 337, etc.

XXIX.

TO [LADY BALCARRES?]

[Date unknown.]

I AM sorry that Love, the best attribute of the Deity, should prove the most unfortunate to humanity. Is it that we are formed only for the love of the Deity that in our worshipping his images on earth we are eternally chastised? Either the image moulders to clay, or we find it is

but a mock resemblance ; we find we are deluded continually in that heart-search. The Deity has ordered us to keep his likeness. If we do so, our love will be universal and productive as his inanimate representative the Sun. This general beneficence for ever rewards the possessor—when we grow particular we grow miserable : our household gods are overthrown by every chambermaid. And we may pretend what we please, but I aver that the crime we wonder at in the Jews is still the very crime of all nations—I mean Idolatry.

XXX.

TO REV. MR. DOUGLAS.

28th November 1775.

YOU mistake vastly, my young pastor, if you imagine that city life is the scene of dissipation. No, no ; it is in the wilds of the Forest we are kept up in a sort of enthusiasm either of mirth and society, or of rebussing and rhyming. . . . I saw none but the sick and afflicted till I broke out like a star in the Peers Assembly, where I walked in by myself at 9 o'clock. I was so surrounded by men that I saw no women till near 10 ; and then was as much rejoiced over by the women. You seem dubious what to call me in the . . . ? . . . way : I begin to be so myself about

my sex. I certainly had more men following me than any woman there, and the women for that reason followed me too, though some I do think for my own sake—particularly Tibbie Hall and Mary Pringle. A vast exhibition of vanity, say you, in this old lady! Very true, reverend sir, and I will be vain while I live of the attention and good-will of all my compatriots. Ay, and try to keep it up; for there is nothing so pleasant and wholesome to the human heart as to love and be loved. . . . I wish to change your genius. You have a good deal of it and it is lost in rebuses. That letter of Hangingshaw is worth 10,000 rebuses. . . . As for printing, never fear. I hate print, and though I have been sung at wells to the flowers of the forrest (*a*), I never was in print that anybody but a street singer could decipher. I have many curious researches to set you on: I wish you to tell me why I should have suffered real martyrdom all last winter by the distress of my son, why I should foresee he was a cripple for life, submitting to that patiently, and willing to devote every hour I lived to attending upon him; yet, now that he writes me he is in perfect health, walks 10 miles a day, in fine spirits and happy, I



This given to me M^{rs} - 1800
after I married - by M^{rs}
Lockburn - The Lady who was the mother

Edw. Davis Hall

Flowers of the Forrest
for Lady Helen Stalk

I've seen the smiling of Fortune beguiling
I've felt all its favours and tasted its dream
Sweet was its blessing kind its comforting
But NOW it is fled fled far far away
I've seen the Forest adorned the foremost
With flowers of the fairest most pleasant and gay
The bonny was then blooming their scents their perfume
But now they are withered and made all away

2

I've seen the morning with gold the hills & dawning
A loud tempest storming before mid day
I've seen the silver stream shining in the sunny beam
Grow dimly and dark as it roiled on its way
O fickle Fortune why this cruel sportings
Why this torment to poor sons of a day
How many of smiles can there be no more of frowns
Nor the flowers of the Forrest are made away

A real picture of the authors feeling

do not feel as much joy as I suffered misery? Answer all this . . . Yes, the Crichton fraternity is very uncommon (*b*). Affection in that family does not depend on duty—it flows from the heart. The children tire when they are a day away from their father, because he is their play-fellow and best friend. I see no young man equal to Mark for manners, principles, and dispositions. I may be partial; yet I am apt to see clearest where I love dearest. Adieu! Write me when you will and what comes uppermost, as I do.

(*a*).—This is Mrs. Cockburn's only direct mention of the song which was to make her name and memory imperishable; and it is otherwise of interest, revealing, as it does, her pride in its popularity, already won. Wells like those of Moffat, Dunse, and St. Ronans were then the great holiday resort of rank and fashion, so that to be 'sung at Wells' was proof of acceptance and approbation in cultivated circles. So much indeed did Mrs. Cockburn come to be identified with her song that she was wont to be asked for copies of it in her own handwriting. One of these, written for Lady Helen Hall of Dunglass, is here reproduced, with permission of Miss Russell of Ashiestiel, Lady Helen's granddaughter. Her ladyship, who was a Douglas, daughter of

the fourth Earl of Selkirk, married Sir James, nephew of Mrs. Cockburn's attached friend 'Tib Hall.' One of her sons was Captain Basil Hall, R.N., to whose reverent vigilance Sir Walter Scott was intrusted when he made his last hopeless voyage to the Mediterranean in search of health.

FLOWERS OF THE FORREST.

(FOR LADY HELEN HALL.)

I've seen the smiling of fortune beguiling,
 I've felt all its favours and found its decay.
 Sweet was its blessing, kind its carressing ;
 But now it is fled—fled far, far away.
 I've seen the Forrest, adorned the formost
 With flowers of the fairest most pleasant and gay.
 Sae bonny was their blooming, their scents the air
 perfuming ;
 But now they are withered and wade all away.

2

I've seen the morning with gold the hills adorning
 In loud tempest storming befor midle day.
 I've seen Tweed's silver stream, shining in the sunny
 beam,
 Grow drumly and dark as it roll'd on its way.
 O fickle Fortune! why this cruel sporting?
 Why thus torment us poor sons of a day?
 Nae mair y'r smiles can chear me, nae mair y'r frowns
 can fear me,
 For the flowers of the Forrest are a' wade away.

(A real picture of the author's feelings.)

~~and so~~ in his notes to Johnson's *Scots Musical*
~~history~~ traces the origin of the song to a
~~very~~ incident:—"A gentleman of
~~the name of~~ in passing through a sequestered
~~place~~ glen, observed a shepherd at some
~~distance~~ tending his flocks, and amusing himself
~~by~~ playing on a flute. The scene
~~was~~ very interesting, and, being passion-
~~ately~~ of music, he drew nearer the spot, and
~~for~~ for some time unobserved to the attractive
~~strains~~ strains of the young shepherd. One
~~particular~~ in particular appeared so exquisitely
~~sympathetic~~ sympathetic that he could no longer refrain
~~from~~ covering himself, in order to obtain some
~~information~~ respecting it from the rural performer.
~~By~~ By, he learned that it was "The Flowers
~~of the~~ Forest." This intelligence exciting his
~~curiosity~~, he was determined if possible to obtain
~~the~~ the air. He accordingly prevailed
~~on~~ on the young man to play it over and over until
~~he~~ he picked up every note, which he immediately
~~wrote~~ wrote to paper on his return home. De-
~~lighted~~ lighted with this new discovery, as he supposed,
~~he~~ he lost no time in communicating it to Miss
~~Rutherford~~ Rutherford, who not only recognised the tune,
~~but~~ but likewise repeated some detached lines of the
~~ballad~~ ballad. Anxious, however, to have a set of
~~verses~~ verses adapted to his favourite melody, and well
~~aware~~ aware that few, if any, were better qualified than
~~Miss~~ Miss Rutherford for such a task, he took the
~~liberty~~ liberty of begging this favour at her hand. She
~~obligingly~~ obligingly consented, and in a few days thereafter

he had the pleasure of receiving the stanzas from the fair author.' Not content with this fanciful and unauthenticated legend, the authors of *Scottish Songstresses* have gone further and identified this 'gentleman of her acquaintance' with her lover, John Aikman—a very gratuitous assumption. The entire story is incompatible with the only authentic statement of the song's origin—that it was written on the occasion of a financial catastrophe involving the ruin of several Forest Lairds. Indeed, the verses bear internal evidence to that effect, their one *motif* being the fickleness of fortune and the uncertainty of riches. Unlike the lines by Miss Jean Elliot, Mrs. Cockburn's do not carry one reference to the fatal day of Flodden. That they referred to misfortune is indeed evident from Mrs. Cockburn's wish expressed to her friend Douglas when recording happier times—'I wish I could write a ballad called "the Forest restored."' There is thus no room for the shepherd and his flute, or for the romantic explanation how music came to be wedded to fit words. Nevertheless, it is true that the pathetic 'owrecome' of the song—

The flowers o' the forest are a' wede away,

connects it indissolubly with the disastrous battle; and to the end of time it will be Flodden and the loss of men that those who hear it will think of, not adversity and the loss of means. It is doubtful if the air to which Mrs. Cockburn's words are now sung is that for which they were originally

written, the probability being that they were meant to be sung to the real old air of the 'Flowers of the Forest,' now exclusively identified with Miss Jean Elliot's verses. That air is very old, having been given in Skene's *ms. Collection* of c. 1640; whereas there is no mention of the modern tune before c. 1790, when it was published in the *Scots Musical Museum* with 'elegant' words (now neglected) by Miss Anne Home of Greenlaws.¹ Whether it was Mrs. Cockburn who first wrote her song, or Miss Elliot, is a question about which there has been great diversity of opinion. At whatever time it may have been written, Mrs. Cockburn's was first printed in the *Blackbird*, a collection published in 1764, whereas we have it on very high authority indeed that Miss Elliot's was not written for at least two years after that date. Answering an inquiry about the ballad from his friend Rose, Sir Walter Scott says:— 'The only good stanzas beginning "There was a lilting at our ewes' milking," were written by Miss Elliot, aunt of the late Lord Minto, in imitation of an old song now forgotten. I have spoken to her about it; she said the first verse was original, and that there were others, but she only remembered one line—

I ride single on my saddle
Since the flowers of the forest are all wede away.

Dr. Somerville, still alive (1825), was in the house of Minto when the imitation was written.' Now,

¹ Afterwards wife of the celebrated John Hunter.

in the reverend doctor's *Life and Times* the period of his tutorship at Minto extends from 1767 to 1772, which quite settles the question of priority. Mrs. Cockburn was fifty-two when her verses appeared in the *Blackbird*; but if the story about the piping shepherd and the young musical amateur be correct, they must have been written at least thirty-four years earlier, while she was still Miss Rutherford. That a girl of seventeen should write lines so full of reflection and pathos and on such a theme is not impossible, but it is very unlikely. If her song takes the *pas* in age, it must give place to Miss Elliot's in point of merit. When Pinkerton published the latter in 1781, he thought it necessary to assure his readers that 'the stanzas here given form a complete copy of this exquisite dirge. The inimitable beauty of the original induced a variety of versifiers to mingle stanzas of their own composure. But it is the painful though almost necessary duty of an editor, by the touchstone of truth, to discriminate such dross from the gold of antiquity!' Sir Walter himself, noticing it in the *Minstrelsy*, observed that the 'manner of the ancient minstrels was so happily imitated that it required the most positive evidence to convince him that the song was of modern date.' And yet we find him, twenty years later, assuring Mr. Rose that he 'never thought it ancient, though *ben trovato*!' Burns had a surer instinct—'This fine ballad is even a more palpable imitation than Hardi Knute. The manners are indeed old, but the language is of

yesterday: its author must very soon be discovered.' Much as he admired Miss Elliot's 'fine ballad,' the Bard was even more indebted to Mrs. Cockburn's, for it seems to have inspired his own first recorded rhymes. It is a little song, which he says he composed at seventeen, eleven years after 'The Flowers of the Forest' had appeared in the *Lark*, which Burns possessed. The similarity in idea and expression is frequent and remarkable:—

Loud tempests storming before middle day.

—*Mrs. Cockburn.*

Lang or noon loud tempests storming.—*Burns.*

Grow drumly and dark.—*Mrs. Cockburn.*

Grew black and daring.—*Burns.*

Swelling drumlic wave.—*Burns.*

Oh fickle Fortune, why this cruel sporting?

—*Mrs. Cockburn.*

Though fickle Fortune has deceived me,—*Burns.*

Nae mair your smiles can cheer me,

Nae mair your frowns can fear me.—*Mrs. Cockburn.*

I bear a heart shall support me still.—*Burns.*

Silver stream shining in the sunny beam.

—*Mrs. Cockburn.*

Crystal stream . . . gaily in the sunny beam.—*Burns.*

(*b*).—The family of Pringle of Crichton.

XXXI.

TO REV. MR. DOUGLAS.

7 April [1777].

YOU will see by the enclosed I intended well to you last week. I have no letter this week from Fairnilee. . . . I am not in a writing mood—there's one of my amusements forsaking me. To what will age bring me? I tire of society, I hate men, books are not new, politicks is gloomy, dismal, terrible; and the worst of it is, I sleep less than ever. But it's no matter. Sir James Naismith is brought to bed of two sons, and my neighbour Horseburgh will soon be marryd to Miss Turnbull of Know, a fine girl, and I am glad of that. Sir Alexander Don, instead of being mary'd, is scamperd of to London. The King intends to go to Hanover and leave the mad people of England to be governd by the madman Chattham. I think he is much in the right. I would do so if I were him. (With two lobsters.)

Note.—Sir James Naesmyth of Posso, 2nd Baronet, married Jean Keith, said to be a great-

granddaughter of the Earl Marischal. He died in 1779. Sir Alexander Don, 5th Baronet, of Newton Don, born 1751, married in 1778 Lady Henrietta Cunningham, daughter and heiress of the 13th Earl of Glencairn. Their grandson, Sir William Don, having left the army deeply in debt, had to part with what remained of his estate, and became a well-known actor, dying in 1861 in Australia, where he was touring with a company. See notes by Mr. C. B. Balfour (now of Newton Don) in *Berwickshire Nat. Club Transactions*, 1892-93.

XXXII.¹

TO THE REV. MR. DOUGLAS.

15 Nov. 1777.

Saterday night 15 of the gloomy
month in which the people of eng-
land Hang and drown themselves.

I RECEIVED your Sunday's oblation with pleasure. It is perhaps the best letter you ever wrote or will write in your life; and as I know you honest and sincere, I must realy doubt your taste and judgement when you say it is cold and uninteresting! We cannot always be animated with passions: is not reason as good? And if we describe or paint pourtraits of manners and

¹ Partly printed in Lockhart's *Life of Scott*, vol. i. p. 119 (10 vol. ed. ; Edin. 1862).

reason on them, is it not more usefull and as entertaining as Declamation? You really write *well*, Douglas. Sorry I am to say by the company you were in, you were oblidge to be a Hogarth. Nothing can be truly more burlesque than a general of an army in a black coat—a manager of campaigns at a fireside, over a smoaking bowl of punch: or a farmer, cōuntry laird, or shope keeper siting in council on the greatest affairs in the Brittish empire. At the same time, I worship the giver of that liberty of thought, speach, and sentiment that gives every one the power of thinking, and the liberty of speaking what they think. At the moment I rejoyce in this, I deprecate the wrath of Heaven for all its best blessings being abused! most for those who wear the garb and pretend to teach the peaceable doctrines of the Friend of Mankind, whose precepts in worldly politicks went no further than ‘Give unto Cæsar that which is Cæsar’s,’ but taught every human heart to love his neighbour as himself, and to pray for their enemys, to bless those who curse you. That last maxim I confess I cannot attain. Though I will not injure, I realy hate people who curse me. How shall I mend that, Doctor? In return for your history of the harvest months I shortly

give you mine. A month or more was passed agreeably in East Lothian—the granary of Scotland. I saw the barnyards full and fields bare when I left it the first week of September. I dined in twenty rich familys—great deserts of fruit. At Tynninghame 19 dishes—pine-apples, four grapes of various kinds, venison, etc. etc. I was always happy to get home to North Berwick with Sir Hew and his children, who had more fancy and less meat. After we came to town, I spent a week and more at Cramond, where a neat occonomy with a genteely plenty—without bustle or parade, or any more disturbance than the sun makes in his usual round—went on without interruption. They are not rich and have no vanity, so enough neatness and welcome is there for ever. A young girl just come from the board-school is their only daughter. She is not a beauty, but so comely you look for ever to her. The freshness of youth and the unaffected innocence of it, together with a proper polite behaviour, makes her a charming girl. She plays well, but I liked her best in a game at romps with her father. From thence all our Cramond family to the amount of 9 went and dined with my excellent friends at Ravelston (a). I carryd my little

bandbox there, and determined to stay a week with a friend of 50 years' standing, whose heart is as warm as her temper is cool, and whose judgement is strengthened by experience and not impaired by years. She understands exactly how to throw in a word that ends all political disputes. She has two daughters and two sons. If I had the wishing cap, they should be mine : but so they are, as it is. There I got the news of my friend Menzies's death. I felt for his family and friends, not for myself, and I found myself uneasy till I should pay that duty to a recent widow from a real friend, in which I had felt comfort myself. I went and stayd two nights there with much self-satisfaction, because I think I did her good, tho' neither of us either cryd or lamented. I never shed a tear of greife in my life, and I thank God the tears I ever had flow yet as they ever did, tho' the occasions are seldom. A genrous deed, a feeling sentiment, a pious prayer, never fails to bring those pleasing dews, which are lockd up in the hard frost of affliction. The first time I heard you pray I was ashamed to show my face, because nobody can understand my temper but myself. I last night sup'd in Mr. Walter Scot's. He has the most extraordinary genius of a boy I

I last night says in two letters I acts to has the
most extraordinary genius of a boy I ever saw
he was reading a poem to his mother when I
went in. I was then read on it was the did comprehend
of a the poem. his passion rose with the storm
he lifted his eyes & kind of there! the maid gone
says he Crack it you they will all perish
after his agitation he turns to me this is too.
Mechanically says he I had better read you some who
more amusing. I found a little what I add has
opinion of Milton & other books he was reading
which he gave me wonderfully indeed one of his
observations was, how strange it was that I am
not a poet! He said I know mean

himself he undoubtedly yielded. - when he was taken to
his last night he told his Aunt he told that Lady
what day today. the why Mrs Cook knew for I think
that a butler so like myself. - I am butler day.
What is a butler? - Don't you know why
it's one who wishes I will know every thing -
now do you will think this a very silly story
pray what day? Do you suppose this boy to be!
Name at - now before I tell you! why 12 or 14 -
no such thing he is not quite six years old
he has a lame leg for which he was a year and half
and has acquired the perfect English accent where
he has not lost some he came & he needs like a
garment. you will allow this an uncommon
coolest.

ever saw. He was reading a poem to his mother when I went in. I made him read on. It was the description of a shipwreck. His passion rose with the storm: he lifted his eyes and hands. 'There's the mast gone,' says he, 'crash it goes, they will all perish.' After his agitation he turns to me, 'That is too melancholy,' says he, 'I had better read you somewhat more amusing.' I preferred a little chat, and asked his opinion of Milton and other books he was reading, which he gave me. Wonderfull indeed one of his observations was—how strange it was that Adam, just new come into the world, should know everything! 'That must be the poet's fancy,' says he; but when he was told he was created perfect by God Himself, he instantly yielded. When he was taken to bed last night, he told his aunt he liked that lady. 'What lady?' says she. 'Why, Mrs. Cokburne, for I think she's a virtuoso like myself.' 'Dear Walter,' says aunt, 'what is a virtuoso?' 'Don't ye know? why, it's one who wishes and will know everything?' Now, sir, you will think this a very silly story. Pray, what age do you suppose this boy to be? Name it now, before I tell you. Why, 12 or 14?—no such thing. He is not quite six years old. He

has a lame leg for which he was a year at Bath, and has acquired the perfect English accent which he has not lost since he came (*b*), and he reads like a Garrick. You will allow this an uncommon exotick? You will also allow this to be a pretty long letter. You owe it to lazyness and to a certain tiredness that grows dayly of that frivolous company that makes me yawn. I begin to like my own company best of any. I hope you will often through this winter be with Brother and Lady—I am sure they will be the better of your prayers and company.—Yours sincerely,

A. C.

I had a visit of Lord Advocate (*c*) before he went to London. The members are all summoned. I wonder if any news will come this night? Remember to put in all the s's and offs and ands I forget while I write. Remember I am old. I don't see well: read me fair. I must tell you of a weding I have heard of—the Countess of Sutherland, 10 years old, to Mr. Weemys' son, 15. I leave you to make the remarks (*d*).

Have you read a history of—I forget his name—on the cause of the fall of the Roman Empire?

By Gibbons, is the name. I wish you to read it and give me your sentiments of it.

No terrible news yet.

(a).—Alexander Keith of Ravelston, Midlothian, married Johanna, daughter of John Swinton of that Ilk, and by her had four sons and two daughters. He died in 1792. In 1822 his son was created a baronet, but on his death, ten years later, the title became extinct. There was a hot dispute between this family and Bishop Keith, the well-known ecclesiastical historian, concerning their respective priority as representatives of the family of the Earls Marischal, the Bishop, in 1750, publishing 'an answer to the unfriendly representations of Mr. Alexander Keith, Junior, of Ravelston.'

(b).—'In the matter of pronunciation,' says Lockhart, 'Mrs. Cockburn was not, probably, a very accurate judge. All that can be said is, that if at this early period he had acquired anything which could be justly described as an English accent, he soon lost and never again recovered it. In after life his tone and accent remained broadly Scotch.'

(c).—The Lord Advocate was Henry Dundas, the famous statesman and supporter of Pitt. In 1777 he was member for Midlothian, a constituency which he exchanged in 1787 for that of the city. In 1802 he became Viscount Melville and Baron Dunira, and in 1806 was arraigned before

the Peers on a charge of malversation of public funds while First Lord of the Admiralty. By large majorities he was declared not guilty of any of the ten charges preferred against him, while of the fourth, which accused him of applying £10,000 to his own uses, he was unanimously acquitted. He was immediately restored to his place in the Privy Council, from which he had been struck out by the King. The lofty column and statue in St. Andrew Square, Edinburgh, were erected in his memory.

(*d*).—It is to be feared that ‘a hate of gossip parlance’ was not one of Mrs. Cockburn’s virtues, at least when there was a wedding in the wind. Elizabeth, Countess of Sutherland, only child of William, 17th Earl, was confirmed in the title by the House of Lords in 1771, and in 1785 married Sir George Granville, second Marquis of Stafford, created Duke of Sutherland in 1833.

XXXIII.

TO REV. MR. DOUGLAS.

[Sunday, 4th January 1778.]

AS this is Sunday night, and the first day I have been alone with my family since I left the Forrest, I dedicate a few moments of the 4th day of the year to my spiritual Father. This will come with your New Year pocket-book. It is

not so entertaining as usual, tho' the prints of actresses are good. I got yours from Fairnilee, and am happy the Christmas passed so well ; for decline and disease must cast a damp upon mirth. Indeed, mirth is but the crackling of thorns under a pot. . . . Real kindness, good will with cheerfulness, which ever attends humanity, warms the heart ; and such I dare say you found at Fairnilee, tho' distress and old age was there. Your last puzzle has puzzled many. Mary Pringle gave it up. A gent'man last night, with whom I dined and also sup'd, was a little fou, and said it was 'woman'—nay, swore it could be nothing else. However, it can be no woman but mother Eve. I wish with all my heart she had choak'd on the apple, and then I had not been born to sin and sorrow. I have many advisers to apply for a commission to my son to have the honour of going to be starved and shot in America, but I decline the honour. An only son that has served 20 years—little he has profited ! No ! No ! I am satisfyd with honour, I now want ease and profit. At the same time I greatly applaud our young nobles, espashily Duke Hamilton, who asks only a captain's comission in a regiment of his own raising. He writes beautifully to his friends on

the occasion ; says he prefers a life of action, tho' attended with danger and fatigue, to a life of idleness and dissipation without pleasure ; and he finds no alternative. Duke of Athole too, tho' married, goes. Lord Macleod's regiment is almost compleat. Lord M'Donald and Gordon Fyvie's all filled. So much for Scots spirit. The King has no truer friends, and he knows it. It's said there are letters from Sir William Erskine, and Lady Colville's Brother arrived last night with the accounts of Washington's defeat, wounded and prisoner, but terrible slaughter on both sides. I have seen so many tears and horrors already from this cursed war, I am sure it is sent for a scourge. Mark Pringle was in a French coffee-house when the news of Bourgoigne's defeat came, and was not able to sustain the insolence and rejoicing. How deep one must feel in a hostile country. Befor I shut this I hope to add a pleasing P.S. Comfort my old Brother and keep up Lady's spirits ; and so God bless you this year and all the years of your life. Amen !

Tuesday morning.—No, news, no, no. We have found out the charade—the forbidden . . ? . . begot *wo* ! and *man's* side produced her. Adieu !

XXXIV.

TO REV. MR. DOUGLAS.

[Probably 1778.]

I GOT yours, and accordingly enclosed the presbytery affair to Captain Napier. Here is his answer. You judge perfectly right as to the use I make of letters, if they happen to divert me. And, in case you doubt of my communicative disposition, I will tell you I transcribed part of the elegie you wrote on a certain lady and sent it to her. Probably you may find her answer also in this. I think it the first of dutys to spread LOVE from heart to heart. Our sex now droops for want of that pleasing admiration, that distinguishing praise from the other sex which I knew and rejoiced in many years ago. I assure you, love of a proper admiration was a spur to my wishing to excell, and tho' I was early totally engaged in Love—yet, for that reason, I wished the approbation of others that my lover might be more confirmed in his choice. *Now* there is such a want of attention in the men to the most

amiable objects that the spirits of the women are languid, and I think the commerce between the sexes is now totally at an end in every respect but by appetite or avarice. In my younger days our men were bred in France, and they could profess an admiration of a fine woman without being in love with her, or having any design on her, legal or illegal. Now a man looks at a fine woman as he does at a haunch of venison; and if she has sweet sauce (plenty of siller), could be prevailed on to take her. Such is the effects of our English connection! . . . Tuesday last Adam had asked Captain M'Dowal and his lady to dine with us; and as I resolved to do her all the honour I could, I bespoke Mrs. Menzies, Miss Shaw, Miss Johnston, our parson, and my nephew Pat Inglis. Mrs. Menzies has most politely or rather humanely asked a visit from Mrs. M'Dowal. Indeed she is far above the little, very little, scruples of her sex. Mrs. M'Dowal is most interesting. She is as tall as Mrs. Menzies—finely made—an air of dignified melancholy. Her face is beautiful, her language real (not plebeian) English; her voice sonorous, her manner modest, but neither awkward, afraid, or ashamed, tho' I am certain this was the first

company of ladies she ever had been in, perhaps in her life. I feel great regard for that girl—her behaviour has been so uncommon. Mr. Rigg's miniatures still hang in my parlor, and are greatly admired. I have endeavoured to prompt him to pursue the bent of genius and add industry and art to nature. I have offered to introduce him to Miss Forbes, who is an original genius improved in Italy. . . . This will come with Mark and Violy Pringle to Fairnilee. So farewell! I have taken a detestation of lyeing epithets of humble servants and stuff, and dear Sir and nonsense. Pliny and Cicero and Paul never begun their letters with 'dr. Sir' nor ended with 'humble servants.' Don't you hate it?

XXXV.

TO REV. MR. DOUGLAS.

1778, April 3.

DON'T you think, Mr. Douglas, that the subterraneous combustibles laid on for the general conflagration is beginning to pierce thro' the earth? What with the Sun above and them below, it is comfortably warm. I wish the blaze

were begun : it will be a noble vision. . . . Well, I sent yours to Lord Napier, and suppose you have his answer by this time. And for your wager with the Miss Pringles, Violy first took it for a burlesque on one of them, which was a sight I could not see. Then she said it was an ideal lady framed out of your own brain. As for me, I am sure I laid the saddle on the right mare. You seem surprised and pleas'd with my tranquillity of temper in the midst of various distresses ! Don't you know I am now a hardy veteran ? Twenty-five years I have felt a new rod (no—'scourge' I should call it) every year ; and though my feelings are as acute as ever, I am so innured to suffer, I would not live now without pain of mind. I have no doubt of my Great Physician's skill and goodness, and live in hopes of perfect recovery whenever my frame is mouldering in the dust. Did Lady tell you I had dined with Mr. Main and saw your sister and Mr. Rigg ? Miss Ann Pringle would fain see Mr. Rigg's miniatures, but they are away. Farewell ! Write as often and as long as you please.

XXXVI.

TO REV. MR. DOUGLAS.

1778, November 16, Monday.

IT is a method of mine to write whenever I am alone, because by that method I have a *tête-à-tête* with a friend ; and, better than that, I have the lead . . . No contradiction, no interruption—just as you do on Sunday. Fine, that's fine : so have at ! And, after reading the longest letters ever you writ, with all your *pros* and *cons*, I tell you you cannot write but at the back window at Fairnilee ; and more than that, tho' they may now have no fodder for your beast, you have two legs, and it is more your duty now to be with my old dear than ever it was. I wish you had only seen him as I did, a Sunday without prayers. He was wearied of his life ; and, very odd but true, though he never looks on at cards, he wearies when they are not there. I am happy to hear he enjoyed the sight of his excellent grandson. Now, Douglas, the 50 reasons you give for not going ! These are absolutely wrong, because how should an old man be eased of pain

and vexation but by prayer and hope? And, unless Lucifer and his crew come there, surely he is entitled to be prayed for and with? This I am sure Lady will join me in. You cannot doubt my sweet Anne? And, tho' Mr. Pringle has not been much accustomed to these services, he always liked and funned with you, and likely may come to think prayer is necessary and fit for a poor dependent being. You will have heard Mark is arrived? My sweet Anne is happy with his arrival. They are uncommon children. I am terrified God take them too soon, to reward their piety. You remember the story of the priestess of the Sun whose 2 sons carried her to the temple? She instantly prayed the Gods to reward their piety, and they dropp'd down dead. An early death saves much sin and sorrow; but I believe in purgatory; and am certain I have been in it now 25 years 5 months. I think I grow worse by punishment. Some of my friends say I am sensibly better—more a christian, more patient, more bearable. For my own share, I am only sensible of being more unhappy, and only patient because I cannot help it. Were you a true catholick, you would order me some bodily crucifixions to cure my soul! Leave that to

Nature. Old age brings pains enow ; and I hope and believe they are salutary. As yet I have felt no effects of old age but loss of teeth and appetite, for which I care not a farthing. But my soul grows more acute as my scabbard decays ; and I think, think till I am sick of thinking. The look back : the look forward : and the look present. Well, the back scene is beautiful. Its edifices are noble, built by harmony and love. The present scene is dark, cold, gloomy, full of clouds and biting frosts. The scene to come is—sickness, pain, poverty, Death. The next is putrefaction, worms, and graves ; and does my restless active spirit live or die with worms ? No ! Angels, friends long lost, I see again. Am I arraigned for evil deeds in the body ? I never injured one, I have helped some ; but I am so imperfect I dare not look up to Perfection. Well then, remember you have there a Brother and a Friend. You are tried by a just judge, one who knows what we are made of, and knows we are frail. Did He descend from Heaven in vain ? Did he wear our form, and is it possible to suppose he will not restore the image first given and lost—restore it even to Doctor Dod (a), and a much worse man, Alex-

ander Fordyce (page 107). Having ended my theological disquisition, for which thank God you have no power to put me in the Inquisition, I proceed to inform you that I gave your letter to a cuz-german of Lord Marchmont's, who assures me it shall be transmitted to his Lady, who best knows the hours of soft solicitation. But, as he is prejudiced against the father, why always apply to him? Is there no other patron to whom he might be recommended. Borthwick Kirk is vacant already, and no helper to an old man, and the people complain loudly. But I'm sorry your young friend is so worthy, for Sandy Cuninghame succeeds John M'Kenzie; and Alexander Fordyce's lady, for his merits? has got £400 a year pension. Lady Advocate's gallant insists on £400 a year to marry her when divorced (*b*). It's a pity, Douglas, you are not a knave, and I am not a —, otherwise I could give you a fine dinner instead of saying 'God bless you.' This will not go till Wednesday, but it's writ Saturday. If anything new occurs, it shall be left open.

Monday 16.—Mark came in to me last night. It's long since I found joy; and I did feel it. He is a delight. *Felix* is printed on his face. He found me with my old sister at neighbour

Horseburgh's. This is so long a letter, I will seal it.

(a).—The Rev. Dr. Dodd, a popular preacher, author of a series of edifying books, editor of the *Christian Magazine*, and a King's chaplain, was hanged in 1777 for forging the name of his patron, Lord Chesterfield, to a bond for £4200, notwithstanding extraordinary efforts by Dr. Johnson and others to secure a pardon. Of his fifty-five works he is now best known by his *Beauties of Shakspeare*.

(b).—With his wife, a daughter of Captain Rannie of Melville, Mr. Henry Dundas (afterwards Lord Melville) was said to get a fortune of £100,000. After the marriage was dissolved he married in 1793 Lady Jane, a daughter of Lord Hopetoun.—*Biographical Dictionary of Eminent Scotsmen*, ii. 202.

XXXVII.

TO REV. MR. DOUGLAS.

5th Janny. 1779.

THANKS, dear sir, for your prayers, your vision, and your history~~ets~~s. I think you lay some stress on the old maid condition—you think those who live long unloved and unloving become in time not lovely? Why, it is not impossible! For a heart that wants objects to

expand it is very apt to close ; and even with all the cares, anxieties, and thousand heart-aches the connubial state is subject to, I think it preferable to the single. Many a good man have I seen ruined by the want of that softening humanising connection. I go further—I think a bad wife far better than none. Indeed, I am not sure but a termagant is the greatest blessing a man can have : it teaches him patience, humility, resignation, bearance and forbearance, which are all the Christian Cardinals. Judge, then, if I can refuse you any favour that can conduce to your happiness here or hereafter. If the female in question prove a vixen, so much the better. If she is saintlike, mild, you will be the worse man, yet fancy yourself better. Give her the song, then ; and, as she has a taste for soft sadness, you may ask the favour of Lady Fairnilee to show you my ‘ Farewell to Fairnilee,’ dated 1st November ’78. I fear, for your soul’s sake, she has little of the devil in her—because those feelings are unnatural to that clever, active, diabolical woman you should have. Therefore I hope she won’t have ye. I write all the clash to Lady, and put up all I can for her. To say truth, none of it is pleasing. It appears at present the men



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FAIRHILL, 1882. BY T. SCOTT, A.R.S.A.

are all fools or knaves, as most are bankrupts ; the women both wh—s and fools, because they appear infamous upon record in public courts. There is so many rich people given way just now as is really fearsome. Our imaginary riches are over, and all it has produced is enriching the ground which soon nobody will possess, and mending the roads nobody will travel. This is quite the case in Airshire. Thank God, my journey cannot be long. I make the way as pleasant as I can, but cannot help remembering better days, when such and such there were, and were to me most dear (*a*). I shall make Mark tell me the heroine of your vision—by the connection of ideas I should suppose it Maria? I fancy it was the same night I fancied a very near friend of mine was accused of being false to a lady by her nearest friends ; and, all I could say, he would not vindicate himself. He said they might think or say as they pleased—he valued them not a straw. But the lady knew him. I endeavoured to make him take off the aspersion ; and, in the heat of the contest, lost my sleep. Vision is all ——. I send you four franks, which must serve for two years. I have a niece to send to India soon with her husband. They

go to Bengal and are gone to London. They sail with Captain Snow. If they can serve you, let me know. Captain Sands belongs to the Company and is a Captain in the East India Service. Your pocket-book will come with this. I'm glad your horse is lame—it will keep you near Fairnilee. My good wishes to your mother and sister, though unknown. Continue to pray for me, etc. A. C.

Tuesday, past 12 at night, 5th of '79.

(a).—'I cannot but remember such things were,
That were most precious to me.'

—MACBETH, Act iv. sc. 3.

XXXVIII.

TO REV. MR. DOUGLAS.

February 1779.

THANK you, good sir, for my evening's entertainment. Who do ye think read it to me? The very lady you had in your eye when you mention the Attalanticks as for male readers! Are you really so unknowing in the world as to fancy a man would read a sermon? You blame my communicative disposition. I can't help it. I never in my life could enjoy a

good thing alone, by which means my moorfowl are always kept the fully proper time, till I can gather friends to eat them. Now, as for secrets, I never have any or seek any. They are generally only interesting to those to whom they appertain, and if anybody honours me with their confidence, they are perfectly safe, being totally forgot in a day's time. I am delighted with your seceders, and am glad to see the Christian and natural humanity can dwell even in the heart of our most absurd sectarys. God bless the good people for being kind to the poor old man. Will you give him a shilling from me, which I enclose. I know it's your New Year's gift you want, and here it comes, as also the Sermon, which nobody has seen but Mrs. Simson, Mrs. Keith and her family, and Violy Pringle and hers. As I have five 2-oz. packets to send Mark Pringle this week, I enclosed your letter amongst them. I have sent him Lord Gardenstone's code of laws for Laurencekirk, which is a most classical performance, and his adopting 500 industrious people is an action worthy of Pliny. I perfectly worship him. It's the finest amusement ever an old Batchelor hit on—have you read it? (a) I lately got a loan of a deistical Liturgy.

Amongst the various sects in London that is one — a publick worship founded by a Deist — prayers, responses, psalms. I enclose you my sentiments on it, tho' I enlarged the Idea to the gentleman who lent it me. I gave Lady Ormiston a' read of it. . . . And now you have got 2 old ladys' opinions, I must tell you Tib Hall's. She never thinks like other people. She says it is certainly a take-in—that some sincere Christian, to gather the free-thinkers to worship God, has constructed it. I send you also a balad composed by Shirreff Cockburn, and given in with his own hand to print. A report went for 2 days that his head was turned. No wonder! Such stuff as it was! However, you must send it back. He has catch'd the robbers, so shall wear bays, if he pleases, tho' a worse poet I never saw (*b*).

I am at present confined with the gout, my foot is swell'd and red, but I have not much pain. . . . All our gay people are fond of the play-house this winter, and commend the performers greatly. Neither Adam nor I go to any publick place. . . . *Sans* more, yours,

Fastreen's even.

AL. COCKBURNE.

(a).—Francis Garden, born 1721, took his seat on the bench as Lord Gardenstone in 1764. When he commenced the improvements on Laurencekirk in 1768, it was a village of six or seven houses, which in 1783 had increased to above seventy, with more than 500 of a population. Furnishing particulars of its administration to the Duke of Atholl, he said: 'I have tried a variety of the pleasures which mankind pursue, but never relished any so much as the pleasure arising from the progress of my village.' Probably on account of his success with Laurencekirk, Lord Gardenstone was asked by the Board of Manufactures in 1780 to report upon Gala-shiels, which he did in a letter containing a severe rebuke to the Laird of Gala for his want of liberality and excessive ground-rents. In early life, Mr. Garden 'was one of those heroes of the bar who, after a night of hard drinking, without having been to bed, or studied their causes, would plead with great eloquence upon the mere strength of what they had picked up from the opposing counsel.' He consumed immense quantities of snuff, which he carried in a leathern pocket made for the purpose. He used to say if he had a dozen noses, he would give them all snuff. Being very plainly dressed, and travelling on the outside of the coach from London, he was once rudely repelled by a party of young bucks, who sent a message that 'they kept no company with outside passengers.' Hiring a chaise and four, he contrived to arrive at the next stage precisely at the

same time as the coach. The youngsters, much surprised, made inquiry as to his identity, on learning which, they sent a polite card of apology and requesting the honour of his company to dinner. It was now Lord Gardenstone's turn to send a verbal answer that he 'kept no company with people whose pride would not permit them to use their fellow-travellers with civility.'

(b).—Alexander Cockburn of Cockpen, then Sheriff of Midlothian, was father of the celebrated Lord Cockburn. His wife was a sister of that Miss Rannie whose marriage with Henry Dundas, Lord Melville, was ultimately dissolved. In 1784 he succeeded in getting a threatening mob of bread-rioters to disperse, but there is no record of the capture of robbers mentioned by Mrs. Cockburn, to whom, by the way, he does not appear to have been related.

XXXIX.

TO REV. MR. DOUGLAS.

Crichton Street, [1st Novr. 1788, or earlier.]

I SHOULD have thanked you before now, sir, for your good epistle, but I have lost the power of the pen. What it would say if it went as usual would be far from pleasing to the reader, as whatever I ever wrote was either the feelings

of my heart or the visions of my imagination. Neither of these faculties have any illumination at present. Much do I wish for a sacred enthusiasm that would transplant me to the world of spirits; but even there I either fail in Faith or in fancy. The feelings of my mind have weakened its vehicle. Of course, it must fail; and I submit to the will of God and His laws of nature. The best thing you can do for me is to pray for me. I mean only for strength of mind and heavenly aid. This world and its goods can give me nothing. I agree with you that the smaller teasing evils of life does more mischief to the spirit than real and great afflictions. But our Father and Physician knows best what bitters to administer to different constitutions so as to restore the soul in such health as to be well enough to meet with Him. You should be often with my old Brother and his goodwoman. Adieu! good pastor. I am, as ever, your friend,

A. COKBURNE.

My pastor here has lost his father, for whom he mourns, though he was long past four score.

XL.

TO REV. MR. DOUGLAS.

Jan. 14, 1781.

I SHOULD befor now have wrote you in return for the history of the inspired Hoy, which I have published faithfully, and have got several subscriptions, which I have given to his cuz Jamie Hoy to gather for him, as I did not chuse to take in money. Jamie supp'd with me last night, and gave a specimen of the poems, which, all things considered, is amazing (*a*). The Duke of Gordon has taken a passion for Jamie Hoy, and has secured him to himself. He is to study the stars with the Duke, and the earth with the dutchess. Mr. Carmichael of Hailes dined in town with his wife, in Captain Clerk's, went to the Coffee House to read the news, and drop'd down dead. They have lived in great harmony many years—a most benevolent couple, kind to man and beast. I send your yearly quota of dress'd ladys—you will have a large seraglio of them by this time. . . . You will be sorry for poor Jenny Scot—a sad marriage

indeed! But it's well she escaped with life. There's a report that 2 soldiers are taken up for the murder, but I fear it was himself.

(a).—The young man here referred to was the author of *Poems on Various Subjects*, by John Hoy, junr., published in Edinburgh in 1781. Although one of Mr. Douglas's parishioners, he had no personal acquaintance with him until introduced by a very laudatory letter from Dr. Blair. The rhetorician, no mean judge, thought the verses 'considerably above the common run of our minor poets,' though he could not advise their publication, there was so little chance of reaping any benefit or gain by it. He recommended Hoy to the minister's attention, observing that 'the openings of genius which he seems to discover beyond the common, entitle him to some notice and regard.' This was in October 1780; and Mr. Douglas appears to have lost no time in getting a selection from the poems ready for the printer. Both his name and Mrs. Cockburn's are in the list of subscribers, along with many of their friends—Sir Walter Scott's mother amongst them. Mr. Douglas contributes a preface and short memoir, certain faults in the original ms. of which are gently and firmly criticised by Dr. Blair in a characteristic letter which has been preserved. Hoy was a native of Gattonside, his father having by hard labour and rigid economy brought up a large family on the produce of five or six acres

of poor land. Violent palpitation of the heart prevented John from undergoing the fatigue of a mile's walk to school, or joining in the sports of boys, his only amusements being to walk slowly by his mother's side, or to learn the alphabet from his father. As soon as he could read, he devoured every book that came in his way, the first time he read a good poem exercising such effect upon his mind that poetry became a passion with him. He aspired to imitate his favourite authors before he had learned to write. Without help but a few rude lines which a neighbour gave him to copy, he was soon able to preserve his little pieces from oblivion, and after six weeks' instruction from a master (the only schooling of his life !), he attained a considerable degree of perfection. Reading Pope's *Homer*, he became eager to know the original. Procuring a Greek grammar and dictionary, and finding their explanations in Latin, he soon, with the help of a Latin-English dictionary, was able to understand them, and in a few years could read *Homer* with tolerable ease ! When his poems were nearly ready for the press, his disease cut short his life at the age of twenty-five. 'With composure and serenity he ended a short life of woe ; earnestly entreating with his latest breath that his poems might still be published, if there was any reasonable prospect of their contributing for a little while to avert impending poverty from a brother whom he loved, and whom nature seemed to have fashioned in the same delicate mould.' Of the poems, it cannot

be said that fate has been unkind in permitting them to sink unnoticed in the ocean of oblivion. They are truly marvellous productions, considering their author's circumstances ; but they deal mostly with the loves and sentiments of Damon, Cynthia, and Delia, after the manner of that period. Their faultless metre and ingenious rhymes could not save them from the doom which overtakes artificiality and mere laboured elegance.

XLI.

TO REV. MR. DOUGLAS.

1781, 2nd Feby.

THAT I feel very sincerely for you, dear sir, you cannot doubt (*a*). You know how much I have suffered by the death of friends. I need not instruct you in resignation ; but I must just put you in mind you have a mother whose heart will be sorrowed. I hear you was at my dear Brother's funeral (*b*) : you never buryd an honester man ! Glad was I of his escape ! I hope you see Lady and Anne often—they need society. Adieu ! Heaven comfort you, prays your friend, A. C.

(*a*).—News had just arrived of the death in India of Captain Walter Douglas, Deputy Adju-

tant-General, and brother of the minister of Galashiels, to whom he left a considerable fortune.

(*b*).—Robert Rutherford, Laird of Fairnilee.

XLII.

TO REV. MR. DOUGLAS.

Ayr. Sunday, 4th Mch. 1781.

IT rejoiced my heart to hear my good Pope Innocent had got a substantial proof of a brother's affection, and to think how happy a mother must be. (I was once a mother!) I know you will receive good fortune with thankfulness, as you received oppression with spirit. I got yours with the news of our poet being gone to sing with the seraphs. . . . I enclose you a line I had from Sir Alexander Dick, from which you will see he is a subscriber. . . .

[Sir A. Dick (9th Feby. 1781) says, ' . . . You deserve applause for patronising this uncommon production of the Teviotdale mountains. My old acquaintances Thomson and Armstrong were hatch'd there, and old Allan Ramsay from the neighbouring hills to the west.']

Lord Kames, $\frac{1}{2}$ guinea, 4 copies.

Wauchope of Niddrie, $\frac{1}{2}$ guinea, 4 copies.

Miss Anne Keith, 2s. 6d.

XLIII.

TO MR. CHALMERS.

[The year after her son's death.] 1781.

I TOOK an airing for my health lately, and came in so sick I dined on valerian and snakewort, a drug I heartily abhor. I intended that day to dine with you, as I know your viands are always tempting, and I wish to be tempted—tempted. But Satan would not let me come, he confined me to my couch. Now, sir, I beg pardon for being old and weak, for upon my honour I cannot help it. I love my friends, if possible, more than ever, but you see I must lie horizontal ways. This season puts me in mind of what Swift says to Stella—

So little gets for what she gives
We really wonder how she lives.

I declare I am so weak I can hardly walk ; meantime I cannot for the soul of me get my soul at rest. I must know how you are ; send Anne to

tell me. It's a little angelick figure that makes me think of those I am going to. Adieu, my dear friends ! I imagine I may write after I am dead.

XLIV.

TO REV. MR. DOUGLAS.

15th Mch. [1781 ?].

ONE week Lady neglected to send in your letter ; two weeks I was in the country—taken by the neck, my head being so fixed to one posture as it had been laid on a block. I considered during this state that I had longer than any of my cotemporarys enjoyd the use of all my members and facultys, that all the severe inflictions I had received was of the mental kind, and I hoped a universal rheumatism might happen to obliterate some of those mental pains. You cannot conceive with what fortitude I received the idea and resigned my body to purgatory for the good of my soul ; yet I have got the power of my neck again, and my head can turn to right and left—not cleverly yet, but without much pain. Lord be thanked, Lady has escaped ! We got a

sad alarm about her by the carrier. Cholack (?) is a clever fellow—whip, Jack, and be gone! What a mercy he left her. Indeed I am thankful for it. You say you can't write to me but when you are merry, melancholy, or in love. Melancholy or in love is the same thing. It is a sad passion and destroys all mirth. Even mutual love is a curse, and attended with perpetual distress. I will tell you my Idea of Love. No unworthy mind is capable of it. It is a touchstone. The coarse, unfeeling soul cannot conceive it. They cannot feel for it. They do not believe in it, or if they see it they look on it as a disease, and try harsh, external medicines which resemble blisters inflamed. I have had many patients in this disease, and always found it a very fatal one to my sex. Now, why the noblest passion of the soul should be the cause of more pain than any other, I have long tryd to find out; but you must help me. I will tell you my reveries about it. It is planted in the soul for the noblest object and by the noblest. It is to live for ever while all others are gone—when hope is lost in certainty, faith in fruition, and compassion has no object. That glorious passion which meets with continued disappointments here will then meet its object and

live for ever enraptured by the benign influences of the supreme beauty. I said before none but noble souls are capable of a steady, firm, and real affection ; and I'm afraid I gave much of it to our sex, though I would do injustice to yours and to truth if I did not confess I have seen as firm in yours, as fervid, ay, and as delicate, though not commonly — not commonly delicate. Do you know, I'm convinced a mind incapable of love is also so of devotion ; but both are unhappy in this state—troubled at doubts, fears, darkness, disappointments. Indeed, did the finer feelings of that noble passion find full completion here, we should never think of Heaven, nor care to change our present state. Enough of this. I like your scheme of instruction, as fit to teach the most common people to give a reason for the faith that is in them. At the same time, it is somewhat dangerous ever to let them know it was ever doubted. They have not time to reason back and for, and it's the better for them. Your next subject will be more interesting, as whatever touches the heart must always affect us more than what is apply'd to the head. I think our preachers in common are too great reasoners. Every mortal has passions. Hope and fear are the springs of action,

and they cannot be too much applyd to. Common minds must have fear. They would not understand my idea of Hell, which is simply this—feeling myself unworthy of my Maker's favour and being debarred his presence.

Have ye read Blair's *Sermons*? (a) I have, and think that one on the death of Christ the noblest grand production I ever saw on the subject. This is holy week in our chappel. I'm not overfond of Mr. Touch's helpers. Dr. M'Night is a scholastick drone, with vile language; Johnston of Leith a vile, affected pathetick (b). I'm certain he does not feel what he says, or he would touch me; and he never does but with what I am sorry to feel for any fellow creature—tho' I have too often cause to feel it both for myself and others. Guess what it is, and believe me I have never felt it for you; but I am sincerely your friend, which is better than humble servant,

A. C.

(a).—The Rev. Dr. Hugh Blair, whose lectures on 'Rhetoric and Belles Lettres' led to the foundation of a rhetoric class in Edinburgh University and the appointment of himself as first Professor. When Creech, the bookseller (Burns's friend), offered Dr. Blair a hundred guineas for his first

volume of sermons, he was incredulous, and exclaimed, 'Will you, indeed?' Yet so far did their popularity exceed all expectation that the publishers presented the author with two additional sums of money. George III. had the sermons read to him by the eloquent Earl of Mansfield, with the result that a pension of £200 was settled on the reverend professor. With all his sense, Blair was vain, susceptible of flattery, and something of a fop. When being fitted with new clothes, he made the tailor lay the mirror on the floor, and then stood over it on tiptoe to see how the skirts hung! His wig, frizzed and powdered to perfection, was adjusted to a hair's-breadth, his gown scrupulously arranged on his shoulders, his bands always of spotless white. He died four days before the close of last century in his 83rd year.—Kay, i. 121.

(b). — Mrs. Cockburn attended Buccleuch Church (then a Chapel of Ease), not more than two minutes' walk from her house. Before Dr. Touch resigned the charge in 1808, the congregation had gradually dwindled away till the seat rents dropped from £150 to less than £30 per annum. By the efforts of Sir Henry Moncrieff and his colleague in St. Cuthbert's, the debt was cleared, Dr. Touch had an annuity of £80, a large addition was made, and an endowment founded before a new minister was inducted in 1813. Dr. Thomas M'Knight, who had been an unsuccessful candidate for the second Canongate charge in 1789, vainly opposed the celebrated Sir John Leslie

for the vacant chair of Mathematics in Edinburgh University, Leslie being charged by the clergy with infidelity. Dr. Johnston, minister of North Leith, left a reputation much at variance with Mrs. Cockburn's unsparing criticism. So deep was the esteem felt for him by his parishioners in Newhaven that the fishwives selling to a higgling customer would say, 'Na, na, I wadna gie them to the Doctor himsel' for that siller.' Arriving at a cottage one day, and being told that Adam L——, the guidman, was away fishing, Dr. Johnston proceeded to catechise the mistress, as was then the custom. 'Can you tell me, Jenny, what was the cause of Adam's fall?' "'Deed, sir, it was naething but drink,' answered Janet, at the same time calling to her husband, 'Adam, ye may as weel get up, for the Doctor kens brawly what's the matter; some clashin' deevils o' neibours hae telt him a' about it.'—Kay, ii. 344.

XLV.

TO REV. MR. DOUGLAS.

4 May 1782.

I HAVE got 24 subscribers, and as Mr. Bell took so large a share, we all wish you to employ him as your bookseller. My nephew Wat Scot is to dine with me—he still looks melancholy.

No time for news, but marriages may do.—
Douglas of Cavers to Lady Charlotte Stewart;
Jamie Ranny, wine merchant, to Miss Mure,
eldest daughter to Baron Mure (*a*).

(*a*).—‘Wat Scot’ was no doubt Mr. Scott of Wauchope, husband of Mrs. Cockburn’s niece Elizabeth, who exchanged poetic addresses with Burns, and entertained him on his border tour (see p. 191). George Douglas of Cavers was married, 10th July 1782, to Lady *Grace*, daughter of Francis, 8th Earl of Moray. Lady Grace lived till 1846, surviving her husband thirty-one years. Bell, Rannie & Co., the well-known firm of wine merchants, date their business from 1715. The Rannies were connected with Rannie of Melville, whose daughter married Henry Dundas, afterwards Lord Melville. Her sister, marrying Sheriff Cockburn, became mother of the illustrious Henry, Lord Cockburn.

XLVI.

TO REV. MR. DOUGLAS.

20th Decr. 1782.

THANK you, good sir, for the excellent epitaphs. They are far the best I have seen (*a*). May mine be prophetick in the last line. I allow for the partiality of a friend in the

character. I am certain I was supported by Heaven to bear and outlive the heartfelt sorrows I have endured, but I am much afraid it was merely a merciful gift, and I had no share in it. For I am not half so devout as I was in my days of prosperity. Tho' affliction has not overwhelmed my reason, it has deadened my heart; and as I have neither hope nor ambition in this life, I cannot rouse my stupid ideas to that blessed state where all my hopes ought to be centred. I go on like a machine, and wish my God would direct me every action of my life; but indeed I am far from that state of mind I wish for. I'm much pleased with my son's character justly mark'd in one line—'Endeared him to the few to whom he condescended to make himself known.' That is truly characteristic. He had a reserve that grieved me much, because he could not communicate his griefs, and even try'd to hide from me the pains of Death. . . . I am sorry for Baby Scot (*c.* p. 175). She's a sweet girl, and I hope something may be done in time (*b*). Speak to Mrs. Plummer about her—she will get her parents to change her or climate. I am curious to know the subject of your publication. You will have acquired one of Sterne's cardinal virtues, but you must get a son

and plant a tree before you are complete ! Lord Kames is writing yet—anecdotes of his life. He is also sitting to a statuary for his statue in marble, to be placed in the middle of a superb monument, of which he has got a model. Somebody rejoiced to see him so cleverly employed. ‘What?’ says he, ‘should I sit with my finger on my cheek, waiting till Death take me?’ We authors, Douglas, carry vanity to the grave with us. I believe it’s as great an enlivener of life as Hope. . . . Are you not laughing now at me classing myself with the authors? But I assure you I have seen myself in print; and once in a paragraph from Newcastle did I read an address of my own in Shakspear’s stile to the King for the Peace. How it got there I never could learn. I want you to put in droll ballad verse an address to the patriotick gentleman who *will* have an internal defence from the wives and mothers of Scotland, offering themselves with their pockers and spits to beat off all invaders, if they will allow their honest husbands to make meal and malt for them, and not turn them all into idle redcoats! In former times I could have sung their internal defence into great ridicule, as I think it deserves. A merry Xmass to you and

your good mother and sisters.—I am, dear sir,
yours sincerely, A. COCKBURN.

The beautiful Anne Chalmers has your charades
and has never returned them.

(a).—The epitaphs here mentioned were found
beside Mrs. Cockburn's brief autobiography at
Abbotsford. Neither appears on the headstone
in Buccleuch Church burying-ground, but its
simple inscription has been kept well to the top,
as if to leave room for an addition. In her will
Mrs. Cockburn says, 'Shorten or correct the
epitaph to your taste'—evidently in the expecta-
tion that Dr. Douglas's would be made use of.
Probably sincere enough, it is in the turgid and
laboured style too common in epitaphs a hundred
years ago.

EPITAPH ON MRS. COCKBURN,

Written by the Rev. Dr. Douglas, Minister of Galashiels.

Here lies

ALICE RUTHERFURD,

Daughter to ROBERT RUTHERFURD, Esqre. of Fairnillee,
long the happy wife—longer the afflicted widow
of PATRICK COCKBURN, Esqre.,
of the ancient family of Ormistoun.

Once a joyful mother,

She had the mortification to outlive her only child,
And bore the extremes of human happiness and misery
with equality of temper,
Which rarely accompanys

LETTERS

Warm affections and exquisite sensibility !

In this manner,

Without ostentation, she gave substantial evidence

That the doctrines and comforts of Christianity

Had taken deep hold of a mind

Which Nature had liberally furnished

With all those rare endowments

That please and charm and win the soul.

She lives in the memory of the

Good,

She lives in the hearts of her

friends,

She lives in the bosom of her

God.

Near to the Mother

Lies the son of her love,

Captain ADAM COCKBURN, of 11th Regiment Dragoons,

the last of an ancient and illustrious race.

Had he lived in an age and nation

Where the mean arts of corruption and servility

Triumphed not over merit,

His military talents and skill in his profession,

and his Roman virtue,

Would have drawn him forth to public notice

and raised him to stations

Equal in trust and in honour to those

Which, in another line,

His ancestors filled with universal applause.

His manly and honourable spirit

Endeared him to the few to whom he condescended

to make himself known ;

And disposed him to leave without regret

A world

So totally opposed to that
Where a mind like his is naturally formed
to dwell
for evermore.

(*b*).—Mrs. Plummer of Middlestead ; either the widow of Dr. Andrew Plummer (herself a Plummer and daughter of William Plummer, who married Miss Ker of Sunderland Hall) or the wife of her son, Andrew Plummer, Sheriff of the Forest, and a learned antiquary. The latter was a Miss Pringle of Torwoodlee, and lived a widow for many years.

XLVII.

TO REV. MR. DOUGLAS.

26 March 1783.

THOUGH I have neither time nor inclination,

I must send you a line to acknowledge the pamphlet, which shall be returned next week. I wrote Lady to tell you that Mr. Keith was much pleased with your pamphlet. Miss Johnston is to recommend it to Drumelzier and Mr. Chartris, who are both non-jurors. They will bring it in fashion ; but nobody reads to get principles—only to get amusement. I don't think the fate of Messina (*b*) so bad as the fate of Britain—to go altogether is nothing compared to being hanged,

or deserving to be hanged, one by one. By what I have read of the army pamphlet I see the difference of the wit of the times you distinguish, and justly. I've just read the 46th Psalm: it is very exact indeed and *à propos*. Preach upon it. Adieu! Very glad Baba Scot is better: she's a good girl.

(a).—A pamphlet entitled *Observations on the Nature of Oaths and the danger of multiplying them* was published by Dr. Douglas in 1783. It extends to 103 pages, and is a well-written, well-reasoned treatise. Election oaths are particularly considered, and remarks introduced on the proposed alterations respecting the qualifications of freeholders in Scotland. Discussing bribery in its effects upon candidate as well as elector, Dr. Douglas says, 'the mind which stoops to offer bribes will also stoop to take them. "I have bought you," said a member of parliament to his constituents, "and, by God, I will sell you!"' On the question of representation the author falls back on 'this general principle—neither to confine the precious privilege of electing representatives in parliament to the few, nor yet to prostitute it to the many.'

(b).—Messina was half destroyed by an earthquake in 1783.

XLVIII.

TO REV. MR. DOUGLAS.

Edin., 3 June 1784.

LADY FAIRNALEE and Mrs. Cokburne join in wishing all health and happiness to Mr. Douglas and his bride. They drank their healths yesterday along with the King's in Lady Fairnalee's house, where Mr. Mark [Pringle], Miss Anne Pringle, and Miss Murray sincerely joined. . . . Mrs. Siddons continues to make work for Doctors, shoemakers, etc. 'The Fatal Marriage' murdered half the women, besides loss of shoes and gown tails.

Note.—Mr. Douglas was married to Robina, daughter of Mr. George Lothian, jeweller in Edinburgh, on 4th June 1784.

XLIX.

13th June 1784.

I AM in high provocation with the gay world. One would think the very mention of a Christian duty scares them from their pleasures. Nobody of fashion would attend Mrs. Siddons,

because she acted for charity ! . . . What can be the reason, think ye ? . . . I dined yesterday with Lady Fair[nilee], Lady Don, Miss Murray, and Don Mark. I got a fine sleep after the fatigue of her stair. The influenza has come here. The treasurer has had it, but is so well again as to go to dinner yesterday where Mrs. Siddons is to be till Glasgow theatre open. Our lawyers have presented her with a grand tea-tray with a fine inscription. Her curtsey of leave brought the tears into every eye. She needs no words : she can speak with every gesture, every motion.

Note.—On this, her first visit to Edinburgh, the rage for seeing Mrs. Siddons was so great that one day there were 2557 applications for 630 places, and many even came from Newcastle to witness her performances. She played eleven nights, exclusive of the Charity Workhouse benefit. At her own benefit she drew £350, and a party of gentlemen presented her with £260, besides which she shared £50 a night. On the piece of plate was engraved—‘As a mark of esteem for superior genius and unrivalled talents, this vase is respectfully inscribed with the name of SIDDONS. Edinburgh, 9th June 1784.’

L.

TO REV. MR. DOUGLAS.

Crichton St., Edin., 20 Sept. 1784.

TO give up a correspondence of many years' standing, just upon the man's being married, has a very bad appearance for the lady. It looks as if he had jilted her and she had taken umbrage. To prevent all suspicions of that kind, which might hurt both your character and hers, I once more take up the pen, tho' after an intermission of so many months I have much less to say than if I had wrot every week. . . . And I suppose you are now so lulled in the lap of domestic felicity your thoughts have hardly once wandered into this city. . . . We heard Mrs. Scot, Gala had been dangerously ill. I hope she is recovering: what a loss she would be to her family! As my parson Touch must be upsides with you in some shape or other, he went north 3 weeks ago on a matrimonial affair; and he writes me he had married—his sister, to a very good man in very good circumstances, but does not mention of what profession. He says when he

went north the fields and inhabitants looked both wretched ; but 14 days' fine hot weather had altered the face of things entirely. . . . Never was I too hot in September before—except dancing in our birthdays—heigh how !

'The spell has ceased in Ossian's Hall,' etc.

Now, as sister is to add a line and writes a good large hand, I leave room for her, etc. etc.,

A. COKBURNE.

Then, in clumsy round hand :—

Good Rev. Sir, Mrs. Cokburne has left blank paper for me to fill up, but that is more than I can do at present, having nothing to say that's worth. So with my sincere good wishes to you and your family, I am, Sir, your most humble servant,

M. R[UTHERFURD].

Windmill Street, 21 Sept. [17]84.

LI.

TO REV. MR. DOUGLAS.

Galashiels, 17th October 1784.

Postscript.—The Lady, Threescore and eleven
 Nell Murray, Nell [years] and nine days
 Molison, Colonel Lyon, past since the nativity
 and Dr. Ruth[erford], of A. C., who has seen
 are just gone after much, felt much, and
 supper. Lady would yet thanks God, who
 not write a scrap, and made her immortal, and
 said the piece here was that now He is and
 too small for her hand. must be her Creator.
 Mind to read this last— And therefore, after this
 and to keep the lobster post- or ante-script, I
 claws for gumsticks. will begin my letter;
 Mrs. Simpson, America, but where?
 brought a Dun : on club
 night—Sunday. This
 is the blank fill'd up.

A vast deal of waste-paper ! and no comodity
 am I so carefull of, as witness every friend of
 mine who, when they see an inch of paper, says,
 'that's a note from Mrs. ——.' Well, we
 shall see if thrift makes me fill it up. Don't you

think following the impromptu is quite necessary in correspondence? Had I had time, the moment I received my birthday letter, I had fifty fine, sincere, sentimental, pious, gratfull things to say; but they come and they come like bees out of a scap, not to suck flowers, not to make honney, but merely to buz, buz and disturb one's train of thoughts crowding in a heap of corporeal figures, which puts to flight all one's mental ideas, and leaves nothing but curls and hoops and caps and ribbons, etc. Now, a week has elapsed, and it is not for want of reading if I forget you. I send seri-comick, celestial, terrestrial Hally's heavenly earthly letters. A lady, a particular favourite, was alone with me when I got it. You are right not to trust me with good letters. You might as well send me an ortolon to eat alone. That she heard me read the letter, that she put it in her pocket, is as certain as that many have read it, tho' it discovers my antiquity day and date. That it met with applause you will be sure; but (to mortify you and myself) I read it to one lady, no bad critick, and religious too. She stopd me and said it was a shame to treat sacred subjects in so ludicrous a manner! I put my letter halfway read in my pocket, and said I

would not cast pearls befor swine, and askd her whether she worshipd God or the devil? Lady, who never forgets birthdays, kept the 1st of October alone. She obliged me to give her a feast on the 8th, which I believe was some haddocks and minced colops. So we solemnized the funeral of my 70th year and baptised the 71. I never was very vain in my youth. I am not sure if ever I was so vain of any Lover or admirer as I was of the heavenly affection of your predecessor, whom, by his own assignation, I rode over from Fairnalee at 6 in the morning to meet him in bed (see *b*, p. 88). He had his fine white bushy hair under a fine holland nightcap; sheets, shirt as white as snow; a large bible open on a table by his bed, with his watch. He embraced me with fervor, and said I would not repent losing some hours' sleep to see for the last time an old man who was going home. He naturally fell into a description of his malady, checkd himself and said it was a shame to complain of a bad road to a happy home. 'And there,' he says, 'is my passport'—pointing to his bible—'let me beg, my young friend, you will study it. You are not yet a Christian' (he said true), 'but you have an inquiring mind and cannot fail to be one.' Then

he prayd fervently for me and said he was wasted, blessd some particular friends, and bid me fare-well. I never was so happy in a morning as I was rideing home. The impression, the picture was engraven on my mind. Instantly, I wrote it to David Hume. But the reason why David did not know he was a Christian was a total want of fire, of ethereal fire. He was phlematick material; and I dare say will now wonder he is alive, and to know what nonsense he wrote! Such a length of letter and I am not begun yet! Don't let your wife see my letters: she'll think I'm crazy. I dined with Lady and Nell to-day, and they are to play at tredril (*a*) and eat potatoes with me. This is the common course. You may believe the Jamaica news (*b*) hurts Nell greatly, but Nell is a composed real Christian and realy trusts in God, without suspecting a grain of the Devil presides over human affairs. Poor P——h, I believe, must wait your Time for luck: he is expected here every day. The most foolish folly of this foolish age is Baloon-madness, which has siezed mobs and monarchs. Our boys mocks it here every day—a fine waste of straw and gray paper. Poor Babie Scot! (*c*) I pity her very much. I hope she will not soon come home. As I am

confessor to many, I wish I had the power of absolution, or at least the power of quieting disturbed spirits. It is severe to see a wounded spirit; but the one I know is not self-wounded, and so I hope it will heal. Service to your fire-side, and bid them eat a lobster to my health.—

Yours,

A. COCKBURN.

Unless the Lady fill up the hiatus in the beginning, it must go as it is, and she is very averse to writing. My only time to myself is from 5 to 7, when all others drink tea, and I read, work, or account.

(a).—*Tredrille*, a game at cards for three persons. 'I was playing at eighteenpenny *tredrille* with the Duchess of Newcastle and Lady Browne.' —H. WALPOLE.

(b).—Nell Murray, probably of the Philiphaugh family. After being ruined by electioneering expenses and the burning of his residence, the laird went to the West Indies. It is no doubt he who is alluded to by Mrs. Cockburn as 'poor P——h.'

(c).—Miss Barbara Scott, daughter of John Scott of Gala, then in her nineteenth year. She died in 1844 at Rothesay, where there is a tablet to her memory in St. Mary's Chapel. Her brother, Sir George Scott, K.C.B., was a distinguished admiral.

LII.

TO REV. MR. DOUGLAS.

1784, 16th Novr.

SEE how much better example is than precept.

I have been counselling him to marry very long to no purpose; but you married on 4th June, and Parson Touch married on the 15th November. O! to whom? to whom? Why, neither to youth, beauty, nor siller. Very strange—ay, but very true. Flora M'Donald, now Mrs. Touch, is middle-aged, comely, sensible, and truly accomplished, particularly in musick. . . . Touch informed me of it on Saturday, and yesterday I saw them set out after the ceremony at 4 o'clock in 2 chaises for the Ferry. . . . My heart is heavy, for your admired Mrs. Simson's most worthy husband is dangerously ill. What a ruin his loss would be to a helpless woman and 5 young ones—the youngest a month old, whom she is nursing! Pray for them and for yours,

AL. COKBURNE.

LIII.

TO REV. MR. DOUGLAS.

1784 (November 26), Friday morning.

I RECEIVED yours last night when I came home at 11 o'clock from sitting all the afternoon and evening with the afflicted widow, seeing her suckle her infant and hearing her recount the thousand proofs of her worthy husband's affection to her, and fatherly care of her mother and young brothers all in America. You may believe I had no relish for puns—a species of wit only tolerable when one lets one by accident, and never fails to raise a laugh—like any other explosion, though it leaves no savoury remembrance. I should be extremely sorry for the industrious inhabitants of your village if it were not for the benevolence and generous compassion of the Lord of the Manor, whose heart must at present be softened by his own sorrows. This is one feature of the word you wish me to define; and you must allow I could not give you a more living example. But I do not confine sensibility to compassion. If it were definable, I think it is a quick perception

and feeling for everything great, good, or beautiful. One who has it strong flows into tears of pleasure on reading or hearing of a generous action ; and shudders at hearing of a cruelty. I have seen people mistake a selfish little mean pride, apt to take the pet, for sensibility—which, examined, is mere want of sense. . . . The Lady, Miss Murray, and I dined with Mark yesterday on a haggis.—
Yours, A. C.

LIV.

TO REV. MR. DOUGLAS.

28 Dec. 1784.

HAPPY years to you and your *cara sposa*. I have only time to tell you Lady got your excellent letter and goose ; but, poor body, had nigh gone to drink nectar and eat ambrosia. . . . It was the Galashiels disease attacked her ; and, now it's over, I hope she'll be better of it. As I never encourage married men in amours, I will add no more to your seraglio ; but I send you a douce useful almanac and a ginger cake to eat with your holyday drams.

LV.

TO REV. MR. DOUGLAS.

1785, January.

I RECEIVED yours and fox-tail safe, for which

I thank you ; and also for your making so long a discourse on so short a text. One error I must remind you of. You mention a lady of 72—once admired. That lady begs leave to inform you she has more admirers and real lovers now than she had at 17, and refers to your own feelings of her perfections ! This same storm has prevented me from joining in any one of the annual festivals. I did indeed dine with Mr. Pringle on Christmas day, but have never stir'd since. Thanks to my attractions, my friends come to me, and in the midst of the season of feasts, I never want a party at night who are contented with my humble fare. Doctor Boerhaave said, and it's true, none but fools or beggars can starve of cold. To show I am none of these, I am clad this moment, and always, in a scarlet flannel short gown over all my cloaths. Some of my lovers allege it is coquetry—I look so

handsome in it. *N'importe*, I'm warm, and determined not to seek pleasure, but enjoy as much ease as possible. . . . You don't crave your almanack, so I suppose you have got one? I had one ready for you, though you know I have never indulged you in a seraglio of dress'd women since you was married! Lady sup'd with me New Year Night, and we have not met since. But I see Nell Murray every day, and niece Simpson is my sure hand, and feeds me and my people with nice drams and sweet breads. Talking of that, I send you a ginger cake for your morning dram. There's a horrid rap! Ah! it's Mrs. M'Kay. If Mr. Main's with you, my respects to him. Mrs. Mackay sends her compliments.

LVI.

TO REV. MR. DOUGLAS.

[c. 1785].

PRAY, how is Mrs. Scot? (*a*) I feel much for the distress of that excellent young woman. . . . In calamity who can help but the God who formed the heart to feel it? Reason is of no use, religion of less. . . . In the meantime, if she

could adopt personal severities, it would do well—ride in rain, wind, and storm till fatigued to death: or spin on a great wheel and never sit down till weariness of nature makes her. I do assure you I have gone through all these exercises, and have reason to bless God my reason was preserved and health now more than belongs to my age. Tell Mrs. Scot how much I feel for her; bid her toyl herself, and she will recover to bless so many who love her and depend on her.

(a).—Probably Mrs. Scott of Gala (Anne, only daughter of Colonel M'Dougall of Makerston). Her husband, John Scott, died in 1785. Their second son, Admiral Sir George Scott, had a most distinguished career, and died in 1841, at the age of seventy-two.

LVII.

TO REV. MR. DOUGLAS.

January 18, 1786.

WHETHER the snow will please to let you receive this and your almanac I know not; but I shall perform my part, and trust only to your friend Jenny to convey it to the carrier. Yours

by Mr. Paterson I received ; but there was no carriers in, I was told, by whom I could write. I hope you and sposa keeps one another warm ? She has a toast in her will keep her right enough. Now, if it should be a Miss, mind I am the first that *toasted* her. Lady has not seen me for some days—to-day she keeps as sacred to her husband's memory. He went to Heaven to-day, it seems. Were I to remember all the days on which I met severe separations—but they have made to me all days alike a perfect ——. I had hopes of sending you a read of interesting memoirs wrote by a friend of mine ; but there is such a demand for them, I cannot this week. We have had variety of shipwrecks and severe distress ; but my sorrow is [for] a poor lady who was set ashore for sickness, to come by land. When she arrived, a perfect stranger, the ship was wrecked—her husband and three daughters drown'd. I could shoot her out of charity.

LVIII.

TO MR. CHALMERS.

1786.

ROBIE ANDERSON is to be married to Lady Anne Charteris ; Macdowell of Logan to Lucy Johnstone. Anti-marriages — a young knight about a year married has left his wife, as she is a devil and he cannot live in peace. Lewis of France has sent his wife to meditate in the country. You 'll see a man here burned his wife just for a Sunday's amusement.

LIX.

TO REV. MR. DOUGLAS.

1786, 15 Oct., Sunday.

I APPOINTED this day, when free of interruption, to thank you for my birthday letter and to obey your pastoral directions by looking back on a very long life. If I were to judge from the various scenes I have been placed in, my memory would make me believe that instead of 73, I have lived 300 years. I can this moment figure

myself running as fast as a greyhound in a hot summer day to have the pleasure of plunging into Tweed to cool me. I see myself made up like a clew, with my feet wrapt in a peticoat, on the declivity of the hill at Fair[nalee], letting myself roll down to the bottom with infinite delight. As for the chace of the silver spoon at the end of the rainbow, nothing could exceed my ardour except my faith, which excelled it. I can see myself the first favourite at Lamotte's dancing, and recollect turning pale and red with the ambition of applause. I advance to the age of admiration and assemblies. I was a prude when young; and remarkably grave. It was owing to a consciousness that I would not pass unobserved, and a fear of giving offence or incurring censure. I loved dancing exceedingly, because I danced well. At 17 my career was stopt. I was married, properly speaking, to a man of 75, my father-in-law. I lived with him 4 years, and as an ambition had seized me to make him fond of me, knowing also nothing could please his son so much, I bestowed all my time and study to gain his approbation. He disapproved of plays and assemblies: I never went to one (see *b*, page 25). Soon the joys and cares of a mother fill'd my whole heart.



View of the mountain. From a distance of 100 miles.

The various places of residence, the many uncommon joys and sorrows I have felt, the most acute sorrows with high strung passions, makes it amazing how at so late a period I have strength to record it. I was 22 years united to a lover and a friend; 50 years a happy tho' anxious mother, now 33 years a widow. See, then, if I have not lived 300 years. Now I feel all the blessings of old age, and thank my Creator and Preserver that he did not hear my prayers for death when my mind was in a tumult of passion and despair. I now seem to myself seated on a height under a serene sky, looking back on the tempest I have escaped, and thankful to my Preserver for allowing me ease—tho' no strength—eyesight, and a capacity to be amused with it; kind friends and a heart grateful and cheered by their kindness; no anxious cares for futurity; no desires for what is out of my power; a wish to make everybody as happy as I am, or, at least, less miserable; a violent desire to be more devout than I am. I pray to be so, for God himself only can infuse the love of himself into the human soul. And, waiting patiently, I answer myself, 'You are seeking pleasure here that belongs to a future world.' Am I right? And now, for constitution

of body, I think mine is what it ever was—never strong, but clean and free of gross humours. I never could eat as much as to feel repletion, nor drink as much as to feel any great degree of intoxication. Not but I have been often enlivened with a glass of Fairnalee ale. You see, temperance is no virtue in me—merely constitutional. Now, my receipt for health is also the same exactly—clean in my person, and, when needful, a dose of elixir. So endeth the chapter of egotism.

I had a wedding in my house on Friday—your cousin Jenny, my little butler, to a Mr. Robison, a friseur, and really a very genteel lad and in good business. I am truly sorry to part with my Jenny. She has been 6 years with me, but I hope she has a prospect of being as happy as she deserves. She and her *caro sposo*, with their attendants, are gone to the Erse Kirk—they are all Braes of Athole people. I never saw a neater young couple. They have both seen good company; for ye know a friseur is admitted to the very best. . . . Love to your spouse and blessing to the young Douglas.—Yours sincerely,

AL. COKBURNE.

LX.

TO REV. MR. DOUGLAS.

1786, 30th Dec., Saturday.

SUCH a combustion as your last letter has raised! You know I cannot enjoy any 'goodys' alone, so I sent it with Nell Murray to the Lady. When I sent for it, they returned me one dated 17th November. I have scolded, Lady has scolded, Nell has sworn: letter more I cannot get; but I remember the contents. No wonder you preached on Death! I daresay you never was so terrifyd at it as when it threatened by the measles? Thank God your boy is preserved to you! . . . You say you have grown indolent in preaching since you were married; by the same rule you should neither shave nor shift. However, I hope it's only the desire of shining is abated. . . . I have only time to wish Mrs. Douglas many happy returns of the season, and to ask whether you will have a *he* or a *she* almanack. . . . The town is at present agog with the ploughman poet, who receives adulation with native dignity, and is the very figure of his profession — strong and coarse — but has a most

enthusiastick heart of LOVE. He has seen dutchess Gordon and all the gay world. His favrite for looks and manners is Bess Burnet—no bad judge indeed (*a*).

(*a*).—To Thomson, then busy with his work on Scottish song, Burns wrote in 1793: 'The three stanzas beginning, "I hae seen the smiling o' fortune beguiling," are worthy of a place, were it but to immortalise the author of them, who is an old lady of my acquaintance and at this moment living in Edinburgh.' He might have added that from these stanzas he had derived one of his own earliest inspirations, much of the sentiment, and not a few of the actual words and phrases, of his song, 'I dream'd I lay,' written when he was seventeen, being identical with those in the 'Flowers of the Forest' (see p. 119, note *a*). Bess Burnet, the attached and dutiful daughter of Lord Monboddo (see p. 76, note *b*), preserved herself 'in maiden meditation, fancy free,' although much courted and admired, not less for her gifts of mind than for her charm of person. Burns fell a helpless victim to her beauty, and in his address to 'Edina, Scotia's darling seat,' mentions her by name, her alone of all the dwellers in the capital:—

'Thy daughters bright thy walks adorn,
Gay as the gilded summer sky,
Sweet as the dewy milk-white thorn,
Dear as the raptured thrill of joy.

Fair Burnet strikes the adoring eye,
Heaven's beauties on my fancy shine ;
I see the Sire of Love on high,
And own his work indeed divine !'

Nor was the impression transitory and fleeting, like too many which fell on his susceptible soul. At the close of 1786 he writes, 'There has not been anything nearly like her in all the combinations of Beauty, Grace, and Goodness the great Creator has formed, since Milton's Eve, on the first day of her existence.' And to Alexander Cunningham, three years later still, he declares, 'Miss Burnet is not more dear to her guardian angel, nor his grace of Queensberry to the powers of Darkness, than my friend Cunningham to me.'

LXI.

TO REV. MR. DOUGLAS.

10th Jan. 1787.

I KNOW you will be angry at the size of my paper, but my neck and head are not in tift for writing. Sorry I am my poems are not returned from Niece Scot (*a*), though she promised them this week. The one I admired most is 'The Cottar's Saturday Night.' The man will be spoiled, if he can spoil, but he keeps his simple at manners and quite sober. No doubt he will be

the Hunters' Ball to-morrow, which has made all women and miliners mad. Not a gauze fantasy of cap under two geany's, many ten, twelve, oh! oh! I have had more pleasure, I'm sure, in cloathing a dirty, naked foundling of 10 years old. I collected pence till I got her clean and whole, and now am to seek service for her. I partly envy you the enjoyment of good Mrs. Pringle and her excellent family. When you see any of them, give my love, tho' Mrs. Plumer has forsaken me. Do you never go to Ashiesteel? I think a visit there would be charitable, and you can hardly see two more agreeable women and fine weans. . . . You'll receive your almanac, as also a ginger cake for your morning dram. Adieu, dear Sir, yours,

AL. COCKBURN.

(a).—In February 1787, a few weeks after meeting him in Edinburgh, Mrs. Scott of Wauchope (born Elizabeth Rutherford and niece of Mrs. Cockburn) sent a rhyming epistle to Burns of considerable point and merit, and had the high distinction of receiving a reply in the poet's happiest manner. One verse of it has become as familiar as 'Tam o' Shanter,' or 'The Epistle to Davie':—

'E'en then a wish (I mind its power)—
A wish that to my latest hour
Shall strongly heave my breast—

That I for puir auld Scotland's sake
Some usefu' plan or book could make,
Or sing a song at least.'

It was natural that Burns, journeying through the Border in May of the same year, should visit his correspondent; but it seems to have been something of a disenchantment: 'Set out next morning (10th) for Wauchope, the seat of Mrs. Scott. Mr. Scott exactly the figure and face commonly given to Sancho Panza—very shrewd in his farming matters. . . . Mrs. Scott all the sense, taste, intrepidity of face, and bold critical decision which usually distinguish female authors.' A few days later he writes down another lady as 'fully more clever in the fine arts and sciences than my friend Lady Wauchope, without her consummate assurance of her own abilities'; while in August he says of Mrs. Dawson of Paisley, that 'like old Lady Wauchope, and still more like Mrs. C—— her conversation is pregnant with strong sense and just remark, but, like them, a certain air of self-importance and a *duresse* in the eye seem to indicate, as the Ayrshire wife observed of her cow, that "she had a mind o' her ain." Can Mrs. C—— have stood for Mrs. Cockburn herself? Elizabeth, wife of Walter Scott of Wauchope, and daughter of David Rutherford, Counsellor at Edinburgh, was born in 1729, and died in her sixtieth year. She had an uncontrollable propensity to rhyme, in which she grew by practice to have considerable aptitude. She wrote

verses in her eleventh year. Her poems languished unhonoured of the press till 1807, when 'Alonzo and Cora, with other original poems, principally elegiac,' were published in London, at the instance of her relatives. The volume, which derives its principal value from Burns's poetical reply, is now extremely difficult to procure. According to the *Musical Museum*, she was early taught Latin and French, and became proficient in many branches of *belles lettres*. It is stated that having shown an early predilection for poetry, she was benefited by the advice of Allan Ramsay, and that she was intimate with Dr. Blacklock, who constantly mentioned Miss Rutherford as a writer whose talents were superior, and whose poetry was deserving of praise. . . . 'Our poetess was no less celebrated for her personal attractions than for her intellectual endowments. The youth who shared her affections, and with whom she was supposed to have consented to pass the remainder of her days, was unfortunately drowned in his passage to Ireland; and the recollection of his disastrous fate clouded her future prospects.' At rather an advanced period of life she married Mr. Walter Scott of Wauchope, near Hawick, a country gentleman of considerable property. (See p. 213.)

LXII.

TO REV. MR. DOUGLAS.

1787, 16th Jany.

ONE of the under officers of my household, commonly called the water wife, being often in a state of intoxication, I had again and again ordered her dismissal, but found I had as little power in giving or retracting offices as the King of Britain, unless my premier chused it. I then enquired what extraordinary merits she had to counterbalance her enormities, and was informed a little ragged child who got our scum-milk, and whom I had always supposed to be her own bastard she bore 9 years ago, was only a foundling which the parish had given her to suckle, her own child having died, and that she had maintained the child ever since, having nothing from the Kirk Session but her nurse fee. I have got the little creature some clean clothes, and find her the cleverest errand goer I ever saw, most distinct at a long message and as literal as Homer's messengers. . . . Now, Mrs. Douglas's uncle, Mr. Tod, is father of the Orphan Hospital. . . . If

this poor child grows up under the wing of the water wife—alas, she has fine black eyes! In short, I have set my heart on preventing her from being damned; so if you will petition Mr. Tod, you will oblige me and do an act of charity. . . . I congratulate you on getting my niece, Mrs. Sands, for a neighbour.

LXIII.

TO REV. MR. DOUGLAS.

12 October, [1787].

THANK you, good friend, for your annual.

How long think you that duty will call on you? I am severely colded and stupified with deaths of near connections all around me; but cannot miss the opportunity of sending you a plaister for your pains. It's a particular paper made with tar. . . . I take the opportunity of Anne Pringle to send this, as she goes to the Forrest Frolick (*a*). Merry may they be!

(*a*).—See verses, page 262.

LXIV.

TO REV. MR. DOUGLAS.

1787 or 1789.

YOU'LL see I did not set your errand, when I tell you I have this moment a letter from Miss Johnstone (*a*), telling me Drumelzier is willing to sign any paper for Mr. Gillon you please, if he knew the mode of doing so. But she says any papers sent to him must be franked, or sent by a weekly carrier.

(*a*). — 'Suff Johnstone,' hardly recognisable under the unwonted title of 'Miss.' (See *a*, p. 79.)

LXV.

TO REV. MR. DOUGLAS.

12 July 1787.

MUCH joy of your Edward! It's a grand name: never call him Ned. I do not wonder you are in love with niece Craigy. She is the sweetest of her daughters, as Milton says. My love to her and all my children. Alas! the place of my nativity is a wreck, like myself; but

no M'Nab nor Time can ruin original beauties—
hills, rivers, woods—no, no ! I write from my
bed, very weak. Remember in your prayers your
real friend, AL. COKBURNE.

LXVI.

TO REV. MR. DOUGLAS.

30th January 1788.

LADY has kidnapd my sermon till she get a
lady to read it to her, for you know neither
her nor Nell ever read. I thank ye for it ; but,
do you know, I am afraid of too much respect.
I'm such a coquet, I like LOVE better than
reverence. Hume Rigg has left a hundred
thousand (a).

(a).—James Hume Rigg of Morton, an extensive shareholder in the Bank of Scotland, and possessed of a very ample fortune, was said to be somewhat parsimonious. His wife, a sister of Sir John Sinclair of Ulbster, being of a more liberal disposition, it frequently happened that their opinions in matters of fashion and etiquette were widely at variance. Dr. Gloag, one of the ministers of Edinburgh, having been invited to dinner, was entertained in a plain but very substantial manner. On taking leave he was pressed

by the lady to repeat his visit a few days afterwards. 'This,' said she, 'is one of Mr. Hume's quiet affairs : the next will be mine.' Dr. Gloag kept his appointment ; and was astonished to find himself one of a large party, for whom a sumptuous dinner had been prepared in a style of splendour, and with an array of waiting-men, for which he was little prepared. Mr. Rigg had no children to inherit his wealth — a circumstance which grieved him deeply ; and by a will supposed to have been made in one of his fretful moods a short time before his demise, he left only a small jointure to his widow, Patrick Rigg of Dounfield succeeding to the whole of his property. Mr. Hume Rigg's house at the bottom of Gosford's Close (now removed to make way for George IV. Bridge) had spacious dining and drawing-rooms, the bedrooms proportionally large and elegant. The lobbies were all of variegated marble, and the staircase of massive mahogany ; but such was the confined entry to this sumptuous mansion, that it was impossible to get a sedan-chair near the door ! Mrs. Rigg was a lady of uncommon vivacity and gaiety of spirit ; and her youthful fancies were not easily sobered down to the quiet cool domestic enjoyments of mature age. She was one of the most agile and graceful dancers of the age, and an excellent violin player ; and has been known frequently to accompany her movements on the light fantastic toe by the inspiring strains of her own cremona.—*Kay's Portraits*, ii. 149.

LXVII.

TO REV. MR. DOUGLAS.

1782, 5th Feby., Tuesday.

WELL, sir, everybody has read and approved, especially us old women. We are willing to appropriate the character on the 16th page, which, tho' bestow'd on the masculine gender, yet we think we may equally claim it. There is something natural in respecting age. I can remember, when I was 7 or 8 years old, there was a very ancient gardener at Fairnilee, almost blind. He employ'd me to clip his white beard every Saturday, which I perform'd with the greatest pride and pleasure. He was great grandson to the Taits of Pirn—a most venerable man; and when he pray'd God to bless me, I felt myself blest. I have often admired Job's Elihu, and his apology for speaking before his seniors. I was a little (or not a little) vain just now. An old admirer of mine has found out I am still alive and in his neighbourhood. He was keen of coming to see me. The last time we met was in the 1745. Our acquaintance commenced in

the 1735. He is now past fourscore, and deaf. He had better been blind, for me. But I am to have an interpreter with a strong voice. If he arrives before your carrier goes, I shall inform you of our Congress. This town is in the high meridian of madness. They are usually gay, at least dissipated, at this season, but this year more extravagant than ever—3, 7, or 10 gueanys for a cap serves one night. More long dinners than ever. Nothing is a—no bankruptzy is a beacon. Mrs. Fall is much praised and much pity'd—she's a noble creature. Hume Rigg has disappointed his widow nobly. She expected sums immense by will. No such will; just her jointure of £150. But the heir is gen'rous and makes it £300. You may judge what a begar she would be with £150: her husband shew'd a gentleman one year's millener bill he had pay'd for her—just neat £500. As I am to have a hakis feast to-day, I must not waste myself. Lady is ill or well as she used to be. She dines with Haining to-day. Dutchess Argyle visits Lady Eglinton for her kindness to her son. The kindness to my son was and is the strong tye I have. I hardly think my gratitude would have extended so far. Adieu for to-day.

Wednesday, 12 o'clock.—I find winter by no means favourable to venerable amours. My swain has never arrived ; we had a hagsis of the nicest gusto—one man and four women. Are you fond of poetry? Do ye know Burns? I am to get a very pretty little thing he calls 'The Rosebud.' Maybe, I'll send next week. With love to your *cara sposa*.

Adieu for this!

I wish you joy of excellent neighbors. I wish I could write a Balad called 'The Forrest restored.'

LXVIII.

TO REV. MR. DOUGLAS.

1788, 6th October.

SO I see what it is to have agreeable neighbours! Old friends are quite forgot! Five or six months did not use to pass and neither the Lady nor Mrs. C. hear a word from Parson Douglas. However, such is my generosity, I am happier to be neglected by my friend sfrom the pleasures of my friends than by any distressful circumstance. It is almost time, however, to refresh your memory, and to tell you both Lady and I are alive. Though frail in our under-

standers, our understanding remains such as it was. My greatest complaint is an activity of mind, and an incapacity of body to obey its master's commands. Upon the whole, none who has numbered 3 score and 15 years has less reason to complain. Then, if I had leg-capacity, perhaps I would be trotting about, disturbing young merry people with old wives' tales. Now, as we vet'rans must find fault with the age we live in, I sit in my scorner's chair, and ridicule all the present fashions. I am as little successful as others of my brother preachers. I've got but one face set out with innocent boldness and one bosom without the appearance of a nurse. I undertook lately to soften a calous heart; but it would not do—not a spark of heat or light could be brought out. My compliments to Mr. Ogilvy—I love everything belonging to his excellent father.

1788, October 8th.—Thanks, my good friend, for your excellent birthday letter. Mine was wrot same day as yours to me. We heard after that you had a daughter, and laughed at your Highland blood that made you think a daughter not worth writing about.

LXIX.

TO REV. MR. DOUGLAS.

1788, 12 November.

WHAT is become of you, Friend Douglas?

It is just 2 months and 4 days since you wrote, and both Lady and I wrote to you after. We suspect our letters have miscarried. We are all anxious about our good King, and in expectation of a grand Comet. If it be commissioned to destroy this globe, no doubt we will be terrified; but when we reflect that we are promised a new Heavens and a new earth in which dwelleth righteousness, the change will be charming. Pray let us know how Mrs. Douglas is, and yourself, and all your concerns in which I wish you all good.

LXX.

TO REV. MR. DOUGLAS.

1788, 11 December.

DEAR PARSON,—I had your most excellent epistle yesterday; and tho', to be sure, it is not quite so sublime as Pliny's epistles, which is

my present study, yet it entertained me as well—especially the account of your bum-battery. Before I proceed, as I have been a fellow sufferer by having a foundation laid on pyles, I must tell you when that happens again, get a heap of leeks boyl'd and put in a metal close stool, sit on it as hot as you can bear it, and so long as it is hot. Then hap yourself with warm flannel below. I have also a reciet for an ointment. Here it is, that I may end my phisical subject at once: 'For the Pyles—Take an ounce diapalma, melt it down very thin with the oyle of camomile; put to it a scruple of saffron finely pounded, 3 grains opium; mix all together and annoint the part.' I have seen this give immediate ease. I suppose you have some 'pothecary or other? He may really give you a box gratis for the secret. My fingers and my fancy are both so frozen, I must leave and apply to Pliny. . . . Your kind enquiry after my little Jenny cost me a message just to tell her, and proud she is of it. She was married October was 2 year to a *friseur*, a very good lad—his name Robison, too. She has born and nurs'd two sons, a John and a Paul. The eldest dyed of the smallpox last week; her husband has had them and Paul also, and are

well. Never was King so sincerely prayed for by all sorts of people. A German chapel affected me most. It was a charity sermon with hymns. A verse was sung about the King. It was stop'd by a sudden ejaculation from every mouth—'O God, restore the King,' and they all burst into tears. See how goodness excels every shining talent. We have a regency and no regency every day. It will be a bad presage if the prince change all his father's friends. . . . I've heard nothing, and long to see nobody but the coalman. We are miserable citizens—neither coal nor water to be had. . . . Lady is lazy, and will not come out. I never stir but 'but a house and ben a house.' I've got a present of a fine large *Gentle Shepherd* with delightful cuts—fine rural landscapes. Cause Andrew Plumer get it. It is an honour justly due our Scots Bard. Can you explain my feeling—I cannot? I read it thro' t'other day and cry'd the whole time tears of pleasure. Adieu, my good friend, peace, health, LOVE, and plenty attend your Christmas. Amen.

13th December.

LXXI.

TO MR. CHALMERS.

1788.

I HAVE not broke cover these three weeks ; even in a chair been coughing with the utmost vigour. If I live till April, I may be able to see you—indeed, I am growing very frail. You are well off that has such a companion as my sweet Anne Page. My Anne Pr[ingle] was at the Archers last night, where was six set (my fair American came here at eleven to supper, and was in fine spirits with a country bumpkin)—people all merry ; and men, women, and matrons danced. I love to hear of it, it's like the days of my zenith and health. Peace be restored to us. Amen! . . . Now for news. I had a letter from Mark Pringle, where he says, 'The parties themselves being hurried, requested me to inform you that Mr. Shaw and Mrs. Menzies joined hands Thursday in St. Martin's Church, in presence of your humble servant (who acted as father and gave the lady away), Lady Townsend, Miss Townsend, and Miss Montgomery. They set out immediately

for Plymouth, 30th April.' With my love to the lassies, and thanks for all your good things, I am, dear Brownny, yours, A. COKBURNE.

Me come! Alas, alas! Long since I was in a coach.

LXXII.

TO MR. CHALMERS.

1788.

I WAS yesterday on a grand expedition—went with Violy Pringle and Lady Fair[nalee] in a carriage to see Raeburn's pictures. Wonderful was the sights I saw—Edinburgh, going out of town; the Tron Kirk, my delight; view of the South Bridge, College, etc. As for Raeburn, nothing can equal that picture of Sir John and Lady Clerk. Lady Arniston looked so glad to see me, I had almost kissed her. Tib Hall—her very self. After all this, I dined with Lady Don—a farewell dinner to our dear American family, who sail to-morrow. God grant a safe voyage! What a charge for a mother, five fine creatures! No, no, for all your questions. Lady Fairnalee and all the Pringles well. Mark arrived at eleven

last night. I must go back to Raeburn. There is John Macgowan in high beauty: he's very nicely drest; he really makes as good a figure as any in the room. I wish I saw you and your two nymphs on one canvas: you sitting, Kate giving you tea or wine, Anne at the harpsicord. I am sorry you still feel you have a jawbone. My tongue has done a great deal of business, for at last it has pushed out two teeth that were very fashious. My blessing to the misses, and believe me, though sans teeth, never sans love to you, while

A. COKBURNE.

LXXIII.

TO REV. MR. DOUGLAS.

1789, 12 January.

TH^{O'} my frozen fingers can hardly hold the pen, I will not omit writing you, as you are in distress. Well do I know that dreadful state of suspense—a state, too, perfectly void of common sense, for we suffer it even when there is absolute certainty of the event. I have often wondered why infants were born just to cry and to dye—just to bring grief to parents. But could we

peep thro' the curtain of mortality and see them amongst angels singing hallelujahs to their Creator, early snatch'd from sin and sorrow, we would rejoice an heir of glory was produced by us. And perhaps the affliction we suffer is a necessary tho' unpalatable medicine to cure many errors. Why are we so apt to forget our Maker in prosperity, yet come crying for help whenever we are in distress? ' It's mean, and perfectly provoking to be conscious of that meanness; yet I confess I feel it is true. I gave Lady your letter to read, and she seriously sympathises with you and Mrs. Douglas. We were sure all was not well with you when you did not write. I hope your bodily complaint is better. You were right to leave a cold house. Warmth is absolutely necessary for you. It's all I can do to keep vital heat in my old bones. God bless you and your excellent wife. Amen !

LXXIV.

TO REV. MR. DOUGLAS.

1789, 1st March, Sunday.

THANK you, father Douglas, for your agreeable communication. It does one's soul good to serve such worthy characters. O ye froward, flattering, foolish race of reptiles, how poor is your appearance on earth or in heaven compared to that worthy mother now posting thro' hell to Heaven. Pray, would it not be lawful to shorten the passage—half the quantity I sent would set her free? I succeeded in my begging wonderfully, as you will see by my last. I have even returned money: such is the power of your pen. For your letter went a-begging. I enclose you Mrs. Mackay's answer. Parson Touch came in yesterday. I told him I would give him a letter of yours to read, as it was pleasing to see such people existed in *low* life. Wish'd I could name as many in *high* under such circumstances. At the same time told him my collection was full, as I did not want his money. He would not be refused, so I took his shilling. Now you will be amazed not to see a farthing

from myself: be thankful I have purloined none of your charity. I have a wright, Tom Miller, who works journeyman work. He has a wife and 3 bairns. His wife has a father and mother past fourscore. My good Tom could not think of their starving alone without help, so he took a house near him, where his wife attends them, and halves the little meal they have with them. The mother has been looked on for death these 10 days; and his wife sits up every night. She was nursing, but Tom made her take off the child, and he keeps it and feeds it all night after working sore all day. Tom says, 'No fear of them, God will send strength.' Does not Tom deserve all my mites I can spare at present? You will get 2 mutchkins of laudanum well wrapt up in rags. . . . News! It's said there's a beast or a fish they call the Cracken in the sea, which is the reason of the scarcity of fish. It devours legions, it is 3 miles long, has 3 hills on its back. They have a map of it. I looked for it in Job, and it is surely the Leviathan. Read it. You will see it is impossible to kill it. More news! I had a present to-day of artichokes and of mushrooms. Is this March? Take care not to trust laudanum to children.

LXXV.

TO REV. MR. DOUGLAS.

1789, April 28.

WELL, I have obeyed your commands and succeeded wonderfully. I cannot place all the merit to my great influence with the men ; I really impute it to the power of your pen. Colonel Lyon read your letter in my Sunday's club, which was declared to be an excellent letter. He subscribed, and I shall note a list of them below. Meantime I was ask'd for whose benefit it was, the man being dead and no family. I supposed it was for the benefit of many souls. I enclose you a letter of Mrs. Mackay's, after seeing yours ; so I sent her half of my subscription papers. How dare you grudge the Thanksgiving Day (*a*), that rejoiced the hearts of thousands. The 5000 charity children singing an anthem delighted me, especially as my sweet Queen shed tears of—of—we have not a name for that emotion. What pleased me most was the mob hissing Fox and Lord Stormont. . . . Lady

is crippling a bit, and I am shot through the right wing, so that it's difficult to hold the pen.

(a).—Thanksgiving on 3rd April 1789, for George III.'s recovery from illness.

LXXVI.

TO REV. MR. DOUGLAS.

1789.

DEAR SIR,—I had both your letters, the one *per post* as also the other, [which] I sent to my cousin Mackay. For, tho' I had used my interest before I heard from you for Mr. Singers, —who is a little man with a large family and little wife, who brings and nurses him a child every 2 years at least, and he has not got a kirk—I wish'd heartily for him. However, I enclose you Mrs. Mackay's answer to both. You see she admires your epistolary talents, and is also to lay out her money in your fashion. You will rejoice at her account of the King, and you will for once admire the dutchess of Gordon. Her second daughter is to be married soon to Sir Robert Sinclair of Murkle and Stevenson. They are first

cousins. I rejoice your child is restor'd to you, and that you and Mrs. Douglas are at home again. Indeed, it is a pleasant thing to feel oneself beloved in youth. I have enjoyd that pleasure with some degree of vanity. In old age I enjoy it with gratitude—by far the pleasantest feeling of the two. I am glad you sought your Almanack—here it comes, a perfect *beau*. If you are still bad of the fundamentals, take a teaspoonful flour of brimston equally mixt with sugar in a draught of sweet whey every morning—*probatum est*. I am afraid my niece, Mrs. Scot, is dying. She is in for a dropsy and astma. She is the most extraordinary woman I ever knew. The activity of her mind has destroyed a strong constitution. There was not the minutest article of food or wear of 20 she did not attend to. All the same, I have lying by me as many elegant poems as will make a large volume. She has writ for them. I hope she will put them in proper hands. It's a pity they should be lost, and perhaps they might bring something to her sister's family (*a*). Nelly Murray promises to give this to your mother's care. She is gone to hear Mr. Merton's funeral sermon by Mr. Hardy. . . .

I have not, and never can have, anything to do with the Regent or his people.

(*a*).—See p. 190, note *a*.

LXXVII.

TO REV. MR. DOUGLAS.

13 Jan. 1790.

THOU hast a most lively imagination, Monsieur Douglas! You fancy you wrote me a birthday letter and a New Year Ode. I have often done the same in bed—written long letters to my friends and really thought I had sent them. Thank you, then, for remembering me even in idea. . . . I'm not in the humour of writing. I have a friend dangerously ill (Mrs. Keith), and my good tenant Miss Duncan is about to have her hand cut off. I hope she'll die first. I tremble at amputation.

LXXVIII.

TO REV. MR. DOUGLAS.

1790, Jan. 20.

WELL, I have got a letter from you at last, yet I still regrave 3 I have lost. I can only account for it by jealousy. Tom Tod is a great jo of mine, and I suppose has kidnapped the letter from his nephew; and I doubt not that, considering my youth and beauty with your known partiality for me, Mrs. Douglas may keep up these letters—a common trick with jealous wives. You see I'm rather in better spirits than when I wrote last. The good old lady stood the amputation with wonderful spirit, and is recovering well. But alas! to want an arm! So far, mine is of no use. I have a horrid rheumatism in my right arm; and when I begin to make wry faces at it—'Ye're no blate, Mrs. Cokburne,' says I, 'really bold to complain. Thank God you have your arm as good. If you had lost one?' My friend, Mrs. Keith, whose affection to me from her 17th year, and begun in the 1747, has been

unremitted, is, I fear, in a declining way. She never has got the better of a cold she caught in the Tron Kirk, time of the Sacrament. Indeed, it should not have been opened till the walls were dry. No, I do not feel for Death now, as I have done. It would be an unnatural folly in one who has one foot in the grave. How I envy worthy Mr. Cranston's translation! I knew him well, and on a very trying occasion he has sustained many sorrows with true resignation. Now he knows why. I was asked to your goose by Lady, but could not go. It's a bad feast season to me, for I can eat no goose, nor hardly either flesh or fowl. Fish and herbs are my food. My arm bids me have done. . . . Love to my rival.

AL. COKBURNE.

LXXIX.

TO REV. MR. DOUGLAS.

1790, Jan. 25.

AT last I have got your last year's letter out of a porter's pocket—as black as Beelze, but the inside quite legible; so that as my friend Mrs. Keith is now able to be a little amused, I

sent it to her. She is fond of your letters: you must acknowledge she is a woman of taste. I send your Almanack instead of a letter. Lady is hirpling terribly, poor wife. She crawl'd here yesterday, only for half an hour, for which I did not thank her.

LXXX.

TO REV. MR. DOUGLAS.

20 April 1790.

I CANNOT recollect the thousand nothings that prevented my writing on receipt of your last letter that you had sprained your arm. This town has really suffered a damp by the melancholy murder of Sir George Ramsay—nothing else has been spoke of. His widow is in terrible grief—can neither swallow, nor shed tears.

Note.—Macrae of Holmains, a first-rate shot, was said to have maintained his accuracy of aim by constant firing at a barber's block kept for the purpose. Having beat a footman of Sir George Ramsay of Banff one evening at the theatre, Macrae informed Sir George of the

circumstance on meeting him next day in the street. Sir George said the man was Lady Ramsay's footman, and he had no concern in the matter. Macrae then went and made an apology to Lady Ramsay. The footman, however, having raised an action against him, Macrae wrote Sir George, insolently insisting that, if the prosecution were not dropped, the man should be dismissed from his situation. In civil and forbearing terms, Sir George expressed a hope that Macrae, on reconsideration, would not think it incumbent on him to interfere in any respect, especially as the man was far from well. Macrae's answer was to reiterate the demand in a note delivered by his friend, Mr. Amory, who, on Sir George repeating his refusal to turn the man off, said he had been directed by his principal to say he thought Sir George not a gentleman, but on the contrary a scoundrel. On the parties meeting on 14th April at Musselburgh, Macrae offered, if Sir George would dismiss his servant, to fully apologise for the message delivered by his friend. Sir George's second, on the other hand, offered, if Macrae made ample apology, to pledge himself that Sir George would either make the footman stop the prosecution or dismiss him. Two hours having passed without bringing the parties to an accommodation, they took up a position at fourteen yards' distance, firing at the same instant. Sir George received a bullet in his body, of which he died on the 16th. So strong was public feeling against Macrae that he dared

not face his trial, and fled to France, where he died in 1820, thirty years after the fatal encounter.

LXXXI.

September 1790.

I HAD a visit yesterday from the Dowager Lady Balcarres and her two fair daughters, Lady Anne and Lady Margaret, who, I assure you, are so far from being the worse of the wearing, that they are handsomer than ever. Lady Anne is grown, not jolly, but plump, which has greatly improved her looks.

Note.—See p. 48 note (e), and p. 107 note (a).

LXXXII.

TO REV. MR. DOUGLAS.

3 October [1790].

DEAR PARSON,—One of your Galashiels weavers is fabricating a gown for me, and I am very impatient for my Galashiels Grey. I have no doubt of making the weaver's fortune,

for everybody follows my lead. I brought the bums in mode; but they increased them to an enormous size. I hope soon to get the better of the iron stanchels the women wear on their necks. I see no danger, and wonder why they guard so strongly where there's no attack.

LXXXIII.

TO REV. MR. DOUGLAS.

12th October 1790.

BLOW, blow, ye winter's wind; thou art not so unkind as hostile fleets when join'd.

Your birthday favour arrived just as I had called for my cloak to go in to the Lady, who has kept the 8th of October 30 years; else I should forget it, were it not for you and her. Well, I hope Mrs. Douglas obey'd and delay'd her production till that day? Instead of a frock, I think you are entitled to a bottle of sack. I wish I were rich enough to send it. It's a lucky year for the Douglasses. You'll have heard there's a young laird of Cavers, which every body is glad of, none so much as the good dowager, as you see by the enclosed. Mr. Douglas, too, is grown

Lord Douglas—quite the reverse of his native land, where all the Lords are grown ‘Masters’ (*a*). I see by yours you think different lights of religion is necessary. Hell seems more useful to the common people, tho’ it has had a bad effect on the poor showman of the hellification. A crazy creature went and told him he certainly would go to hell, for if it were not in his heart, he could not have shown it. The poor man turn’d melancholy; good Mr. Erskine visited him and assured him the show was quite innocent, and would rather do good; but he drown’d himself. I don’t know if you know Andrew Stewart. He is to be married to-day to a beautiful girl of 22. I forget her name. I knew him well 37 years ago—a hansom man, past major. I have seen a happy couple with as great disparity, tho’ I do not approve of January and May. Indeed, the seasons seem to be changed—warm winters and cold summers; and now, when I expected my old friend October a clear-headed, cheerful fellow, behold he begins to bluster like September. He roars so, I cannot hear myself think. Our birthday company was Miss Sophy Johnston, Miss Molison, Miss Murray, Miss Simpson, Lady, and me. O, Lady’s 2 men, vizt., Colonel Lyon and

Peter Inglis. Lady fell asleep and could not assemble with me and the rest. At night I drank my Laureate's health. My present reading is the Great Frederick of Prussia's history. A greater robberer and murderer is not in any history. I am ashamed of the enthusiasm I once possessed for him. I wish I were done with him: he puts me out of temper. . . . A. C.

Remember my love to the Torwoodly and Sunderlandhall families.

(a).—Lord Douglas (see p. 40) was born in France, where titles of nobility were being suppressed.

LXXXIV.

TO REV. MR. DOUGLAS.

9 January 1791.

I THINK, friend Douglas, if you had been dead, you would have wrote us word. Lady and I have many conjectures about you, as we miss our New Year letter, and your almanac lies unasked for. I fear, indeed, you are in some distress, which God mend, if it is so. The weather is so

tempestuous, Nell Murray has never got to your mother's to ask for you, but believe me, we are all most sincerely yours.

LXXXV.

TO REV. MR. DOUGLAS.

12 Oct. 1791.

IN times of old the poet Laureate got a butt of sack and a thousand something—pounds, merks, or crowns. Sure I am, not a crowned head ever got so good a birthday sonnet. I never get leave to keep it, so many desire copies. Vanity makes me lend it. Mrs. Touch is a copier. I believe she thinks Mrs. Douglas an object of envy. Now, as I cannot pretend to puncheons, etc., I send you a cake carminative, as also a pikinini bottle of Come-fort. A bliss oft wished for seldom comes amiss, though some say Carminative and Diuretick will damp all passion sympathetic. The passion must be very slender, if it can't pardon the offender. Now, I've let out my full flow of nonsense—just in stile with the Laureate gifts—nonsense for sense. Tell Mrs. Douglas to return little bottlie full of [?]

from her cow. I have a fancy that country milk will be a draught of health; and I wish for my bottle, that it may be renewed at Christmas—the only birthday I have kept these many years. I sent a line to your mother, as also a read of yours. It is delightful to make a mother happy. Nephew Peter Inglis has begged a read of yours to your good friend Mrs. Craigy. I have a periodical headache, and here it is; so God bless you.

With a cake and a bottle of antiventosity drops.

LXXXVI.

TO REV. MR. DOUGLAS.

11 Mch. [1791].

I WRITE chiefly to bid you tell your carrier to change his quarters, or nobody can trust anything to Galashiels. I have such a history about the bundle I sent as would amaze you, and the grossest impertinence to my maid. I am delighted with Logan. Read Howard's character at end of 2nd sermon.

LXXXVII.

TO REV. MR. DOUGLAS.

1st Sept. [1791].

I AM truly thankful for my capacity of being entertained with cards and novels. I see some (and ye know there cannot be many) of my contemporaries so tired of life and so unwilling to quit it—they are truly ‘objects.’ . . . How happy am I whose utmost ambition is to sit easy and stretch my legs from my parlour to my bed-chamber. My mind, however, is active enough. I fight for the King of Sweden, I wear the French national cockade pinned to my chair, I recommend Britton to God Almighty to give us peace or war as he sees best.

LXXXVIII.

TO MR. CHALMERS.

October 1792.

A LIBERAL heart deviseth liberal things; yet you did not know what you sent will grace my birthday—the first I have kept at home. Good Lady Fair[nalee] made me keep it with

my friends, for spirit was willing—flesh weak indeed.—Yours sincerely, A. C.

LXXXIX.

TO REV. MR. DOUGLAS.

10 January 1792.

HEALTH, love, peace, and plenty lie with my good parson Douglas! With my blessing I send your annual almanac. *Question to answer:—* A young lady, whose beloved husband died suddenly lately, wishes to know the opinion of divines whether we shall know our former friends in the next world; also of the intermediate state (*a*). I write from my bed, where I have lain seven weeks, and am a living skeleton. Pray for patience and submission to your sincere friend,
AL. COCKBURN.

(*a*).—Charlotte, youngest daughter of William Baird of Newbyth, and sister of General Sir David Baird, married Lord Haddo, eldest son of the third Earl of Aberdeen, in 1782. He died in 1791, in his 27th year, leaving six sons and a daughter to the care of his young and sorrowing widow. The Bairs of Newbyth were intimate friends of Mrs. Cockburn.

XC.

TO REV. MR. DOUGLAS.

1792, Wed., Feby. I know not what.

YOUR new year letter answered our demand ;
 it has gone among many ladies who take
 copies. The young widow is Lady Haddo,
 whose lover, husband, and friend died in a
 moment. Sudden death has been very fashion-
 able of late. I go piece-meal. I am deaf, blind,
 and lame, but content, because I know God
 made me and knows best how to take down his
 own work. See me when you come among your
 old wives, and in the meantime pray for me. I
 can see no more. A. C.

XCI.

TO REV. MR. DOUGLAS.

13 October 1792.

I HAD a very long letter from my cousin, Mrs.
 Farquharson, with wedding gloves. I hear
 all the widow ladies are displeased—‘What made
 her marry? She was rich enough,’ etc. etc. I
 say this is ‘sour plums!’ The misses, too,
 wonder he did not take a younger wife—‘£5000

a year and only one daughter.' What a blessing will she be to that daughter ! Mrs. Mackay was form'd for riches ; and being step-mother, much is now in her power. The gentleman would take none of her £10,000, gave a handsome jointure, has taken a furnished house, 14 Princes Street, at 20 guineas a month. Meantime she is gone to see her dominions—two furnished houses—one at Marle Lee, another at Innercaul, a fine high-land place. He is rather an old man, was a companion of the General's, and, I suppose, wanted only a sensible, cheerful companion. . . . I see you have no connection with the Russel family—he would not suit you. . . . The French philosophy begins to prevail here. The Colliers see no reason why the Duke of Buccleugh should sit idle and they dig. They have read Payne, and so our coals are dayly dearer. The success of the French army, too, is encouraging, but Sir Robert Keith writes that it is all french gasconade—not a word of truth. But I must have done—blind, blind ! . . . I have hardly eyes to give my love to Mrs. Douglas and blessing to the Babes.

A. COKBURNE.

Note.—Oct. 4, 1792. At her Grace the Duchess

am as weary of it as you can be ; and yet it's very impious and ungrateful to say so, as I have every blessing that fourscore can enjoy, and not a gray hair in my head, nor a spoil'd tooth in my mouth. Yet I have plenty of hair, and can send you a lock if you won't believe me. I can also send you plenty of teeth to convince you. Like a female, I begin with my remaining beauties! Next, free from pain and distress. When my maidens carry me from my bed to my chair or *vice versa*, I sing to them all the way to cheer the weariness of attendance. Both my maids were taken ill—my particular attendant has been ill 5 weeks, the other a sprained leg. Good luck, all my domesticks are my friends. A married one sent in a daughter of 10 year old, and I am very well served. Next, I come to my friends—you know they love me. But some go to Heaven and leave me. Mrs. Keith, Ravelston, and I were as sister souls from ten years old ; and pleasing is the memory of days that are past. . . . Now, I inform you your goose was eat here, and was a goose of great character—fat, juicy, etc., and your healths were faithfully drunk. Lady Fairnalee and her family, niece Simson and hers, friend Peacock, our only man, for men are always scarce

in the holydays. All I shall mention of politicks is to tell you my first toast is our Provost Elder (*a*) and our King. I'm quite in love with the provost's excellent fancy of sending the King his hansel of a Scots Bannock, and Sir John Sinclair (*b*), the real Scots man, has sent such gowns as never was seen for beauty to the Queen and Dutchess of York. All our ladies went to see them. They are Shetland wool, spun to 4 spynde in the pound, beautifully diversified—dark purple clouds on the bright white, with silver stars among the clouds. There is also a charming vest for the Prince of Wales. Happy, happy George! Oh miserable Louis Bourbon! I do think Satan has got permission to rule in France for a season. I believe I wrot you before of a visit I had from Mr. and Mrs. Farquharson. Mark and Anne dined with them. Everybody pleased with him—a sensible well-bred man. . . . This is Friday. Before Wednesday you'll be tired of my scrawls. Mark told me of a sermon of yours, but did not send it. It's not easy for me to read writ now, but your hand is print. I will send your Almanac . . . and a read of Dr. Hardy's sensible pamphlet *The Patriot* (*c*). I cannot give it, as you'll see it is a present from the

Author. I wish you would let your wife rest. You a farmer! that never gives rest to your ground! Fy, fy! I won't suffer it. A poor young man just left a widower with 6 infants—by the same bad management. A daughter of President Dundas (?) she was. Adieu! My kind love to Mrs. Douglas. I send a pock of nuts to the Infantry. Sunday endeth what began I forget when.

(a).—Thomas Elder of Forneth was three times Lord Provost of Edinburgh. During his second term, 1792-94, he had a post of heavy responsibility in consequence of the disturbances and agitation fomented by the 'Friends of the People.' In December 1793, assisted by only a few of the respectable citizens, he ventured to suppress two meetings of the famous British Convention, taking ten or twelve of the leaders prisoners. Next year the Council voted him a piece of plate for his spirited and prudent conduct during these commotions, and on the formation of the Royal Edinburgh Volunteers he became, by unanimous vote, their first Lieutenant-Colonel. In 1795 he was appointed Postmaster-General for Scotland, and in 1797, at the request of the Senatus, he sat to Sir Henry Raeburn for a portrait intended for the College library. The Lord Provost, it was allowed on all hands, says the

editor of *Kay*, 'cut a most martial figure in his bandeliers of a Saturday ; but was not quite the fittest person for a drill, being unused to the complicated evolutions which it was his duty to direct.' At first, he had made up his mind to enter the ranks as a private, and only accepted the colonelcy from a sense of duty and loyalty to the King.

(*b*).—Than Sir John Sinclair of Ulbster, 'the Scottish Patriot,' no man ever laboured with greater zeal, or more disinterestedly to promote the interests of his country. In 1770, while yet but sixteen, he succeeded to the family estate, amounting to upwards of 60,000 acres, but yielding a rental of only £2300, half of which went on interest of burdens. To construct a road over Ben Cheilt the young laird surveyed the ground, marked out the line ; and assembling over 1200 farmers and labourers well equipped with tools, made a road which had hardly been passable for horses in the morning, practicable for carriages before night—a work of truly indomitable resolution for a lad of eighteen. Nor did his life belie its promise. He was unwearied in his labours for the public weal, especially the advancement of agriculture. His success at home, coupled with prolonged travel throughout the Continent, led to acquaintance with the most famous and influential men in Europe. He had no less than twenty-five foreign diplomas, and had corresponded not only with Continental statesmen, but with Presidents Washington, Jefferson, and Adams.

(c).—The pamphlet was written in refutation of Tom Paine, and in favour of limited monarchy.

XCIV.

TO REV. MR. DOUGLAS.

Sunday, 3 Nov. 1793.

IT would be a sin to neglect my laureate's pension. I'm incapable of writing. This comes with your 100 gallons butt of sack, though it is transmogrifyd into two wind expellers—a bottle and a cake. I want your allowance to put my last birthday poem into the *Edinburgh Magazine*, or some popular paper—it's like will never be seen again. I pass you a poem. I wish for a prayer to teach me not only patience on the road, but also thankfulness for so many blessings. Amongst the chief I reckon the unremitting care and attention of my niece Simpson, for whom I ask a prayer. My love to your wife and blessing to the babes—give them plenty of cake.

THE STORY OF 'FELIX'

THE STORY OF 'FELIX.'

YOU desired me, my Lord,¹ to give you my reasons for naming a worthy gentleman lately dead, 'Felix.' Your desires are to me commands. I commence Biographer at once; and though perhaps my ideas of felicity may not intirely suit the present taste, yet such they will ever remain with me.

My Felix, whose memory I revere, and whom I am to *prove*, as well as assert, the happiest mortal I ever knew, was born in the north of Scotland. His father was an officer, who married his mother when a widow, and as he was the only *child* son of a marriage, he had the advantage of having a sister. Whoever has belonged early to a fraternal society must at once see the advantage a human mind has by a habitude of social affections.

Luckily for him his parents were not rich. He told me he was accustomed to go bare-footed till he was fifteen years old; and as at that

¹ Earl of Haddington, from whom there is a letter to Sir Walter Scott, with the *ms.*

period poverty was no hindrance to literature, Felix was taught all sorts of classical learning, without any particular view of profit or application to any one. He was born with quickness of apprehension ; and a memory so tenacious [that] it never lost what it once received. Full of ideas and knowledge, he was rather petulant when young ; but still, born under happy auspices, love, which (when genuine) can make a fool wise, conducted him to the most amiable woman, whose hand and heart he acquired, independant of all advantages of fortune. She indeed left an opulent family by moonlight, and married the man of her choice. See him, then, at twenty-one married to the Mrs. of his heart : and in a few years father of many children. Straitned in circumstances they surely were ; but he could walk 20 miles without being tired ; and she could sit at home to teach her children—for which reason their children (none of which were ever at any other school but their own) thought, read, spoke, and wrote better than any other children.

Observe, then, that the vanity which might have led him on to perpetual petulance was changed into other objects : he forgot himself,

and only saw his children—vanity grew into affection. During this period of his life, and the times in which he lived, pleasure run high in Scotland. Some remains there were of our French connexions, and we were not Anglois enough to place the whole delights of life in the table (in eating)—there was gaming, drinking, and galantry to women then in fashion. No man was more in fashion than Felix! During the festive years of life, no man enjoy'd more the pleasures of society, nor with higher relish—though he was never known to deviate one moment from his conjugal attachment; or ever from vanity or vice attempted to seduce unwary hearts. He was a gallant man, but not a man of gallantry. So far I have conducted my Felix to all the sorts of pleasure unmixed with remorse: And here I must breathe before I see him weeping over the Mistress of his affections, and the mother of his infants. There is a pleasure in such a grief—it mends the heart:—while regret for the bad conduct or baseness of the living renders it hard, cold, and insensible. Happy in thy tears, my Felix! and now for ever happy in the society of her who caused them.

End of the 1st Book.

Having conducted my happy marriage to middle age; he had so few sorrows as to give a relish to better. Just as he was left with five children, a dreadful blank in his heart, and a situation of his fortune, two things that made him easy. An uncle died, and he was left with as much as could sustain his frugal, decent manner; and he had a fortune to have his sister, a woman of sense and great good-nature, living unmarried. To her care he left her, and accepted the offer of going to a nobleman who found his knowledge would be of use to him as secretary to an Embassy. He soon distinguish'd himself, and was promoted to an Envoy or resident at the Courts—an employment most suitable to the genius of any, as he had great facility in all languages and manners, and a taste of all the elegant draperies of life. He enjoyed *all* that his ambition could wish, those very years, when the mind, by tenderer affections, grows up into the

of bustle and ecclat: as he had no love of money, and found it impossible to save anything worth considering, he never retrenched those expenses which were better bestow'd in doing honour to the court he served. Fortune, however, came unasked. An old foreigner, who had been long a resident at the Court of Vienna, and who gave it up on account of his years, grew acquainted with the Hero of my story, and extremely fond of him. He told him, though he was too infirm to act in a publick capacity, yet long custom made it absolutely necessary for his existence to know what was passing in the world: for which reason he intreated Felix to accept *his* Hotel and equipage of all kinds; to live with him at his expences. He assured him it in reality would cost him nothing, as he was determined always to live as he had done, having not one relation in the world that he knew. Felix was so importuned that he could not refuse the old gentleman; and it was during *his* life-time that he saved four or five thousand pounds, which he settled on his three Daughters:—his eldest son being in a handsome rank in the army; his second in the navy, where they both served

with honour and reputation. The old *foreigner* wish'd to make Felix heir to all he had ; but that he would by no means allow, and convinced him how hurtful such a step might be to his character. He therefore enquired about and found some distant relation on whom he persuaded him to settle his effects, only accepting a present of plate.

Twenty years roll'd on in this honourable and agreeable exile, when his health beginning to break, he desired to be recall'd ; which his Sovereign immediately granted ; and as a mark of his royal approbation, settled £1000 yearly on him for life, with a survivancy of £300 a year to his Daughters after his decease.

End of the 2nd Book.

Behold the happiest of the sons of men arrived in his native land rich and independant. See him in the arms of his children and friends bedew'd with the tears of joy and affection. A strong fit of rheumatism had convinced [him] he ought to return : and the first day of the new year after his arrival, he embraced each of his three Daughters and presented them with

bonds to the amount of the sum he had saved—a most unexpected present; and he then told them how he came to have so much.

His original sense, much improved by seeing various climes, courts, and manners, made him courted by all men of taste. No table of elegance was notified or adorned without Felix made one. He forgot not, however, the friends of his youth: I was in his house when I saw him lead in an old, poor, worn-out gentleman whom he early loved, and forever carressed; while he supported his feeble steps of age with all the tenderness a mother has for a child. I saw no more, for my eyes were dim with tears!

He had in these later years so uncommon a share of health and faculties that his age was forgot; neither indeed was he old, for I have been told he indulged himself with a mistress, which however neither perverted his heart nor drain'd his purse. We may call it immoral or not, as we please. After living in all the High Stile of Courts, he establish'd a certain ettdicatt of living, very like the plain opulence fifty years back:—scottish broth, boyle, fish, and roast every day, and never deviated into two services.

He never was one day, if fair, but he walked

and national; every one thought themselves honour'd by the honours confer'd on the Felix family: it was a general rejoycing; nor was there one degrading word utter'd to pull down those whom the King delighted to honour.

In all the Annals of Briton [Britain], I defy any of my Brother Biographers to produce me such a similar case. Behold him through the three stages of life: his youth spent in the highest enjoyment human nature can possess—love, friendship, and paternal affection; see him in middle age in as high a state as the highest ambition could frame a wish for. Behold him in old age, attended, carress'd, and almost adored by his children; his three daughters his companions as his friends! proud of their father: every thought was employ'd to amuse or to oblige him; while all that ambition could frame in the air-built castles was realized in his sons—full of years and full of honours. It pleased heaven still to distinguish him above the race of men! Without one faculty decay'd, his mind and body in full vigour, at the age of 76, a sudden stroke, unattended with pain, took him from this world. The tears shed over his grave were the tears of affection, of approbation, without the poignancy

capacity led to his appointment as Under-Secretary of Foreign Affairs, under Lord Sandwich. Early in 1748 he distinguished himself by the success with which he negotiated certain points in the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, soon after the signature of which he was appointed to the important embassy of Vienna. There he remained until the avowed coalition between Austria and France, in 1757, led to the recall of the British embassy. From Vienna Keith was sent to St. Petersburg, where he arrived in March 1758, in the sixtieth year of his age. It was during the reign of the Empress Elizabeth, who, imprisoning Ivan VI., the rightful heir, had seized the throne for herself. Intrigue succeeded intrigue at the Russian court, Elizabeth being an idle, superstitious woman of lax morals, and constantly under the influence of favourites. Keith appears to have been much in the confidence of her nephew and heir, the Grand Duke Peter, and of his duchess—afterwards the infamous Empress Catherine. Feeling, however, that he had 'not been of any use in his post,' and 'seeing very little hopes of things mending here for some time,' he wrote home in 1760 requesting his recall. This was refused, and two years later the British ambassador sent home a graphic account of the revolution by which Catherine dethroned her husband and seized the reins of power. In a separate letter sent by the same messenger, Keith says, as 'I am not so happy as to be in the Empress's favour, it is my earnest desire to have my recall sent to me as soon as possible,' a request

urgently repeated two days later. According to his son's *Memoirs*, there had been 'an unworthy intrigue on the part of a junior scion of the diplomatic body to fasten on Mr. Keith the imputation of conduct towards the Empress, while yet Grand Duchess, equally foreign to his head and heart.' This intrigue, which is bluntly described in another account as 'a charge of improper conduct with the Czarevna,' appears to have been without foundation. Apart from 'the absolute, I might say the lowest, submission on the part of Mr. ——' by whom the fama was spread, the Czarewitch's confidence and trust in the British ambassador, both before and after his accession to the crown, render the imputation incredible. Be that as it may, Keith hurried home immediately after Catherine's usurpation; and seems to have at once taken up his abode in Scotland. For the first ten years after his return he resided in a villa called the 'Hermitage,' where, like his brother-in-law, Sir Alexander Dick, he indulged in the pleasures of gardening. The finest, if not the first, melons grown in Scotland are said to have been sent home by him from the southern provinces of Russia. With him lived his stepsister, a nonagenarian, who lived till she achieved her century, and his three daughters, Agnes, 'Jannie,' and Anne—a happy and contented family. Jupiter Carlyle, the genial minister of Inveresk, however, says that Keith on his return 'complained that the society of Edinburgh was altered much for the worse. Scottish lairds did not

now make it a part of their education to pass two years at least abroad, whence they returned, that portion of them who had good sense, with their minds enlarged and their manners improved. They found themselves now better employed in remaining at home, cultivating their fields; but they were less qualified for conversation, and could talk of nothing but dung and bullocks. Keith's complaints of their dulness were confirmed by his son, Sir Robert, who came to stay for three months, but returned at the end of one. The ambassador had recourse to our order who had, till lately, never been thought good company; so that finding Blair and Robertson and Jardine and myself, to whom he afterwards added Ferguson, good company, he appointed us Ambassador's Chaplains, and required our attendance at least once a week to dinner at his house. He was soon chosen a member of the Poker Club, which was entirely to his taste.' He appears to have made frequent journeys to London, where his intimate knowledge of Continental politics was greatly valued. 'I went,' says Dr. Carlyle, 'with Captain Lyon and his lady to a *ridotta* at the Haymarket, where there were not fewer than 1500 people. This, Robert Keith, the ambassador, told me was a proof of the greatness and opulence of London, for he had stood in the entry and seen all the ladies come in, and was certain not half of them were of the Court end of the town, for he knew every one of *them*.'¹ He describes Mr. Keith as 'a very

¹ Carlyle's *Autobiography*, p. 187.

agreeable man, with much knowledge of modern history and genealogy, and a pleasing talker, though without wit and humour.' Comparing him with his friend, Mr. Hepburn of Keith, Lady Dick remarked that 'while Keith told her nothing but what she knew before, though in a very agreeable manner, Hepburn never said anything that wasn't new—the difference between ability and genius.'¹ Happy as Keith appears to have been with his family, he at one time contemplated a second venture in matrimony. Carlyle, mentioning a fastidious lady (Miss Mally Cheape) who had refused himself and another admirer because they were or had been clergymen, says she rejected Ambassador Keith because, while his rank balanced the difference of age, she could not bear the idea of quarrelling with his daughters, her companions, and not much younger than herself. At last, after having rejected rich and poor, young and old, to the number of half a score, she gave her hand at forty-five to the worst-tempered and most foolish of all her lovers, with whom she lived a miserable life until they parted. That his daughters were devoted to Mr. Keith is evident from the touching terms in which Anne announced his death (21st September 1774) to his son, Sir Robert.² Two days before his death, he had a conversation with his daughter Nancy, 'enumerating all the good

¹ Carlyle's *Autobiography*, p. 207.

² *Memoirs of Sir R. M. Keith*, by Mrs. Gillespie Smyth, pp. 73, 403-4.

things of his life—his worthy parents, his genteel education, his angel of a wife, his comfort in his children, their honourable and easy situation, his own consciousness of goodwill to all men and the goodwill he had met with—all he dwelt upon with pleasure.' 'Felix,' indeed, Mrs. Cockburn might truly call him. Of his daughters, Anne lived to enjoy the privilege of the friendship of Sir Walter Scott, who has immortalised her in the character of 'Mrs. Bethune Baliol,' and who in a letter, dated 13th June 1818, acknowledging a ring of hers sent as a memorial, paid a most beautiful tribute to her character, her abilities, and her disposition. Keith's two sons, Sir Robert and Sir Basil, have their chronicles written in the *Memoirs* of the former, published in 1849. In his *Journal of a Scottish Tour in 1790*,¹ 'R. L. W. says, 'We dined at Lord Ankerville's, who had Sir R. M. Keith to meet us. Of the urbanity and vivacity of this gentleman I had heard much, but found him equal to report. He was replete with anecdote. I recollect one, of the famous General Mustapha, who commanded the Turkish artillery above twenty years. He was a Briton, but no one could discover and he never would divulge his birth. On dispatching a courier to Sir Robert at Vienna, nature was too strong within him. "Tell him," said Mustapha, "my name is Campbell. He may not remember me from that; he will if

¹ *Journal of a Tour from London to Elgin*, by R. L. W.; Edinburgh, 1897, p. 55.

you tell him I was his schoolmate at Prestonpans.” Mr. A. H. Anderson, to whom I am indebted, not only for the identification of ‘Felix,’ but for much information concerning him and his family, hazards the very likely guess that ‘Mustapha’ may have been a son of Colin Campbell (brother of Sir James Campbell of Aberuchill), who was collector of customs at Prestonpans up to 1737, when Sir Robert was a schoolboy of seven. As a man, he was the essence of gaiety and geniality. At a bright and jovial gathering of fifteen young men, mostly Scots, at Richmond, ‘Bob Keith sang all his ludicrous songs and repeated all his comic verses, and gave us a foretaste of that delightful company which he continued to be till the end of his days.’ Apparently he was of one mind with Gratiano—

‘With mirth and laughter let old wrinkles come!
And let my liver rather heat with wine
Than my heart cool with mortifying groans.’

‘I had the joy of seeing Sir Robert Keith,’ writes Mrs. Cockburn, ‘the very day he dined with you. He is ten years younger since I saw him, which is twelve years ago. Bless us! how we talked!—in short, we could not get speech for speaking. . . . My Anne thought fit for love of him to take the blybs: it’s better it struck out on the skin, so it was but skin deep.’

In 1795, after seeing some friends (the Prussian Minister among them) who had been dining with

him into their carriages, he fell down on the threshold of his door at Hammersmith, and died in the arms of his servant. In the *Musical Museum* (iv. 300) there is mention of the Memoirs of Sir R. M. Keith, and Madame P——lle, containing anecdotes of his private life, which appeared in Ruddiman's *Weekly Magazine* for August 1772 ; and a specimen of his powers of parody is copied from the *Caledoniad*, published in London in 1775.

SONGS

THE PRETENDER'S MANIFESTO.

To the Tune—*Clout the Caldron.*

1.

HAVE you any laws to mend ?
Or have you any grievance ?
I am a Hero to my trade,
And truly a most leal prince.
Would you have war, would you have peace,
Would you be free of taxes ?
Come chapping to my father's door
You need not doubt of access.

2.

Religion, laws, and liberty,
Ye ken are bonny words, sirs,
They shall be all made sure to you,
If ye 'll fight wi' your swords, sirs.
The nation's debt we soon shall pay
If ye 'll support our right, boys,
No sooner we are brought in play
Than all things shall be tight, boys.

3.

Ye ken that by an Union base,
Your ancient Kingdom 's undone,
That all your ladies, lords, and lairds
Gangs up and lives at London.
Nae langer that we will allow,
For crack—it goes asunder,
What took sic pain and times to do ;
And let the world wonder.

2.

For here, by brandy vine inspir'd,
The frolic took its birth,
While Horn and Soph and all conspired
To spread around the mirth.
St. Andrews still remembered be
For mirth and joy and loyalty.
Fa, la, etc.

3.

To the jolly Colonel and his spouse,¹
Pray see a health go round,
For such a pair in any house
Is seldom to be found.
And here 's to charming Elphinstone,²
May she soon of two make one!
Fa, la, etc.

4.

To Guadeloupe's fair Governess,³
We next due honours pay,
And to the lad that she likes best,
Though he be far away.
Fly, gentle peace, with downy wing,
And to her arms her soldier bring.
Fa, la, etc.

¹ General R. Dalrymple Horn Elphinstone married Mary, daughter of Sir John Elphinstone of Logie.

² Miss Peggy Elphinstone.

³ Colonel Dalrymple, Governor of Guadeloupe, married a daughter of Mr. Douglas of St. Christopher's.

In days of joy, of mirth, and glee,
Thy halls with music still resounded—
Thy master kind, thy mistress free :
Their cheer and goodness were unbounded.

2.

Ah, see that seat of joy and mirth,
Where every guest was gay and cheerful,
By flames now levell'd to the earth,
And all around grown dark and fearful !
Behold those tenants of the Vale
Are now obliged to change their master.
With heavy hearts they tell the tale,
And weep for his and their disaster.

3.

Ah, hapless friend ! I mourn thy fate.
Too much, too much, I feel thy sorrow—
To seek an unknown clime so late,
And leave thy sweet, thy native Yarrow.
May Heaven, who over all presides,
Secure thee peace, secure thee plenty ;
The sun 's the same that rich provides
The earth with all that 's good and dainty.

But now, on soul of woman bent,¹
He skorns her earthly tenement—
Woe's me for poor Sir Hew!

4.

Humane and gen'rous drops the tear,
Most genuine and true,
For woes that others feel and bear,
From gentle, kind Sir Hew.
Though out of sight is out of mind,
Yet see him, and he's always kind—
Our worthy friend Sir Hew.

5.

To all below him mild and just,
And to his friendships true,
Forsakes no friend: betrays no trust :
Adore him in this view !
Yet fog or rain will cramp his heart,
One hour he'll act a different part—
Who is not like Sir Hew ?

6.

Nature cried (who form'd this man
A little odd and new),
'Try, Art, to spoil him, if you can,
For I have made Sir Hew.'
Art, fond of spoiling Nature's trade,
Said—'Let him be a member made,
Then know your own Sir Hew.'

¹ Sir Hew had declared to the lady that he once admired her person, but now only her good understanding and mental accomplishments.

4.

The feat we'll remember
Of Roxburgh's member,
This 12th of October.
He bumpered till four,
Took his coach at the door,
And galloped home sober.

5.

By a wife and a maid
A plot was there laid
With nodding and winking.
Was it not rare done—
They got Scott o' Harden
To reel without drinking!

6.

Good Haining resisted,
Tho' ladies insisted—
He'd dance none, the fouter!
Yet, if I heard aright,
The very next night
He danc'd with a souter.

APPENDIX

CHRONOLOGY—MRS. COCKBURN AND

REV. DR. DOUGLAS.

MRS. C.'S AGE.	YEAR.	
	1713.	8th October. Alison Rutherford born at Fairnilee.
10	1723.	Mother died.
15	1728.	Patrick Cockburn admitted advocate.
16	1729.	Elizabeth Rutherford, niece, born.
18	1731.	12th March. Marriage of Patrick Cockburn and Alison Rutherford. Mrs. Cockburn's brother died.
19	1732.	15th May. Adam born, only child.
22	1735.	Lord Justice-Clerk Cockburn (father-in-law) died.
24	1737.	Brother's wife died in childbed.
32	1745.	Adventure with Prince Charlie's guard.
33	1746.	Rev. Dr. Douglas born.
35	1748.	Husband's brother sells family estate of Ormiston.
37	1750.	Mr. Cockburn goes to Hamilton Palace as Com- missioner for Duke.
39	1752.	Left Hamilton Palace for house in neighbourhood.
40	1753.	Removed to Musselburgh, where, on 23rd April, Mr. Cockburn died. Mrs. Cockburn boards with brother-in-law. Son goes to Holland.
41	1754.	Removed to Edinburgh, where joined by son. John Pringle, Lord Haining, died, aged 80.
42	1755.	Sister seized with strange illness.

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MRS. C.'S AGE.	YEAR.	
43	1756.	Adam obtains cornetcy in 11th Dragoons. Mrs. Cockburn removes to Blair's Close, Castle Hill. Nephew boards with her.
45	1758.	Death of John Cockburn 'of Ormiston'—husband's elder brother.
46	1759.	Robert Burns born.
50	1763.	David Rutherford of Capehope died (brother).
51	1764.	Son's regiment ordered to Germany. 'Flowers of the Forest' published in <i>The Blackbird</i> , a collection of songs. First published letter to David Hume.
55	1768.	Hangingshaw House burned. Poem on event.
56	1769.	Purchased house in Crichton Street, Edinburgh.
57	1770.	Offer of marriage from old friend. Death of sister. Sister's son commits suicide (second attempt). Rev. Robert Douglas ordained minister of Galashiels.
58	1771.	Sir Walter Scott born.
60	1773.	Mrs. Cockburn's first known letter to Rev. Mr. Douglas.
61	1774.	Death of Ambassador Keith ('Felix').
63	1776.	David Hume died, aged 65. Death of Andrew Pringle, Lord Alemoor.
64	1777.	Mrs. Cockburn discerns genius in young Walter Scott—aged six.
65	1778.	'Farewell to Fairnilee.'
67	1780.	Captain Adam Cockburn died—aged 48.
70	1783.	Rev. Mr. Douglas publishes pamphlet on 'Oaths.'
71	1784.	" " married to Miss Robina Lothian.
73	1786.	Burns in Edinburgh.
74	1787.	'Fairnilee a wreck.'
77	1790.	Mr. Douglas wrote <i>Statistical Account of Galashiels</i> .

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